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Daily Report
East Europe

FBIS-EEU-96-043 *4 March 1996*

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Albania: Interior Minister on Search for Tirana Bombers

AU0103164496 Tirana ATA in English 1924 GMT 29 Feb 96

[Report by Aida Sakja]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Tirana, February 29 (ATA)—Interior Minister Agron Musaraj said in parliament today that the February 26 terrorist act, in which a car bomb blasted a supermarket in Tirana, killing four people and wounding 27, "has been organised according to a well prepared plan" and that "all the its authors' actions have been calculated." [passage omitted]

He said that police forces during their procedural actions have detained persons suspected of implication in this criminal act, "especially persons with physical appearance like those of the author, as described by eyewitnesses on the spot."

The identikit of one of the executors which the criminal police specialists managed to ensure on Wednesday has been distributed to all the police bodies and sectors.

Musaraj said that in this situation, police have organised extra special services. [passage omitted]

Proceeding from the statements issued by various political parties and the latest statements of parliamentary groups which favoured a severe attitude against the crime and asked the swift identification and hunting down of the authors, Musaraj said that "as several parties have very specialised bodies, if we cooperate, the author will be caught very soon."

Albania: Prosecutor Denies REUTER Report on Bombing

AU0303165596 Tirana TVSH Television Network in Albanian 1900 GMT 1 Mar 96

[Interview with Tirana Prosecutor Adnan Xhelili by Erestina Halili in Tirana; date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Halili] Referring to a report by journalist Benet Koleka, REUTER stresses among other things that sources close to the investigation group confirm that an Italian involved in the car bomb has been arrested. What is your pronouncement?

[Xhelili] First of all, I express my regret that various journalists or correspondents create such insinuations to seek professional credit with such painful events. I am speaking here of a legal responsibility that derives from the procedural criminal law provisions that a just, equal, and regular legal procedure has been ensured, which helps in strengthening the judicial order and implementing the Constitution and the state laws. I stress that it is not true that any Italian national, involved or suspected to be the perpetrator of the car bomb incident, has been arrested in the criminal procedure regarding this event. Moreover, I can say, still preserving the secret of the investigation in a justified way by the Penal Procedure Code, that the investigation of this issue has not spread over the Italian air waves.

Albania: Police Deny Italian Involvement in Bombing

AU0103213496 Tirana TVSH Television Network in Albanian 1900 GMT 1 Mar 96

[Report by Leka Ndoja]

[FBIS Translated Text] The political background, the leftist extremists, the former secret police—the constants that have been declared since 26 February, the day of the terrorist act in Tirana, also remained at the focus of today's news conference by Mr. Agim Shehu, deputy interior minister and general director of the police department, who is leading the group set up to throw light on the responsibility for the crime.

Mr. Shehu considered the 29 February report by REUTERS that mentioned the implication of the Italian Mafia to be misinformation. No Italian national has been arrested, investigated, or eavesdropped on. Neither the owner of the vehicle in which the bomb was planted nor the car bomb are linked to Italy, the chief of the Albanian police says, considering the dissemination of such news as erroneous.

Regarding the information spread on 29 February by the agency in question, REUTERS correspondent Koleka clarified that he had asked, with no result, to be able to communicate by telephone with the Interior Ministry. However, Mr. Shehu mentioned his reserves about making public the course of the investigation into the massacre, which would not help the discovery of the persons who committed the tragedy, which aimed at attacking the people and shocking the public order.

Asked whether the police had any information about a similar event before the attack, Mr. Shehu answered: In a way, the leftist circles mentioned it some time ago.

Asked whether someone had officially undertaken to perpetrate the massacre, Shehu answered negatively.

Mr. Shehu linked the investigation and arrest of some journalists only with their resemblance to the identikit picture of the culprit, and not with their profession.

At the same time, the investigation by the Vefa company regarding the incident was considered normal.

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Mr. Shehu finally confirmed that there is cooperation with Interpol and affirmed Italian and U.S. specialists are involved.

Albania: Journalist Arrested for Role in Tirana Bombing

AU0103195896 Tirana GAZETA SHQIPTARE in Albanian 1 Mar 96 p 1

[Article by Mentor Kikia: "Journalist in Handcuffs: 'Incited Violence'"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Tirana—The first detainee suspected in connection with the bomb attack has now been placed under arrest. On Wednesday (28 February) evening, the courts ordered the arrest of the journalist Ylli Polovina. Unconfirmed reports from sources in the courts mention the arrests of other detainees. The order for Polovina's arrest was issued in absentia by the Tirana Court at about 1900 on Wednesday. The last of the staff members of KOHA JONE who were detained on Monday evening was released yesterday morning. The three former Sigurimi officers, whose identities have not been made known, remain in detention. The courts have not confirmed their arrest, although the legal deadline for this measure passed on Thursday evening. [passage omitted]

Albania: Court Supports Arrest of Correspondent

AU0103170096 Tirana ATA in English 1928 GMT 29 Feb 96

[Report by Zh. Lazri]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tirana, Feb 29 (ATA)—The Tirana Court has agreed to the arrest measure for Ylli Polovina, one of the first detainees after the February 26, 1996 blast.

The Tirana Prosecutor's Office issued the request for the arrest of this defendant late Wednesday [28 February], court sources say.

Several articles in various newspapers, among which that in the newspaper POPULLI PO last November, entitled "The Skopje Car Bomb May Be 'Repeated' in Tirana," have been sufficient proofs to consider prison arrest.

Based on Article 223 of the Penal Code, Polovina is accused of public appeal for violent actions. This accusation envisages sentences ranging from fees to three years imprisonment.

According to the respective procedures envisaged by the Penal Procedure Code, he is expected in three days to be subjected to an interrogation sitting in the Tirana Court, after which a more defined verdict can be given regarding the custody measure during investigations.

Meanwhile, no confirmations have been available on measures of arrest for other persons, who have been detained or interrogated recently in connection with the bloody Monday [26 February] massacre, which claimed the life of four people and wounded 26.

Albania: Journalists Criticized for Bomb Allegations

AU0103204896 Tirana RILINDJA DEMOKRATIKE in Albanian 1 Mar 96 p 3

[Commentary by D. Hata: "Major Cupi and His Lieutenant Barci"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Sigurimi always used to pay 8 leks for its most disgusting and shameful jobs [reference to traditional daily rate of pay for Sigurimi informers]. Nothing has changed today, and even though the pay has been increased, the same revolting work continues. Operatives are still being used as kamikaze pilots or cannon fodder by the former Sigurimi chiefs.

There may be no connection here, but a journalist called Emin Barci wrote yesterday in KOHA JONE an article entitled "Vefa and the Reichstag" [reference to Vefa supermarket destroyed by Tirana car bomb on 26 February], comparing President Berisha to Hitler and accusing the present government of itself planting the bomb in Tirana in order to eliminate its political opponents. Any normal person understands that such madnesses can only been written when either the author's wits have turned or when he is under orders to sacrifice himself. At a time when Sigurimi elements are accused of planting the bomb, Prec Zogaj, Major Cupi, and now Cupi's lieutenant Barci are speaking up in their defense. It is difficult to understand how a person can do such jobs for eight leks, but in the end it is not difficult to realize that those who once collected their eight leks are continuing to zealously serve those who issue them their orders.

Albania: Municipality Declares Blast Victims Martyrs

AU0103171196 Tirana ATA in English 2042 GMT 29 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tirana, February 29 (ATA)—Tirana's municipality declared "Martyrs of Democracy" Vera Dume, Muhamet Karamani, Asim Karamani, and Vaid Osmani, victims of the blast outside the "Vefa Aldes" supermarket in central Tirana on February 26.

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Vefa Company, too, declared martyr Vera Dume, its ex-employee. Vefa will also grant a perpetual pension to her family.

Dume is the second martyr of this company, after another employee of Vefa, killed sometime ago.

Albania: DP, PS Leaders Indignant Over Tirana Bombing

AU0103180696 Tirana ATA in English 2041 GMT 29 Feb 96

[Report by Flora Nikolla]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Tirana, February 29 (ATA)—[Passage omitted] On behalf of the parliamentary group of the Democratic Party, its chairman Ali Spahia expressed deep indignation at the criminal act of February 26 and the support for the government's measures to identify those responsible and their punishment.

Spahia accused of this "certain remnants of communist dictatorship, crime apologists," who "have long since been calling, through the pages of the opposite press, for civil war, tension and clashes, for violence and even for car bombs, trying in this way to create the psychosis for carrying out the macabre act," which aimed the destabilisation of the situation at home and the increase of political and social tensions on the eve of the electoral campaign.

On behalf of the Socialist Party [PS] parliamentary group, Fehmi Abdiu, called on all the political forces to hunt down and punish the authors. He reiterated the PS demand for organising a joint rally of all the political forces.

The chairman of the Social Democratic Party parliamentary group, Skender Gjinushi, expressed readiness to support, prevent and find out the authors of the crime.

Albania: Press Commentary on Tirana Bombing

AU0103154996 Tirana ATA in English 1115 GMT 29 Feb 96

[From the Press Review]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Tirana, Feb 29 (ATA)—All the dailies cover today the indentikit of the person accused of the terrorist act in Tirana.

RILINDJA DEMOKRATIKE carries the editorial "Terrorism—Leading Ideology of Fundamentalists." The paper carries in its front page an article entitled "The Crime Background." The author puts some questions whose answers are given by socialist leaders through declarations. The paper publishes the text of a talk with the mayor of Tirana Municipality under the title "Consequences of the Car-Bomb Towards Total Elimination." [passage omitted]

ZERI I POPULLIT writes that main leaders of the Socialist Party conveyed their condolences to the families of the February 26 blast victims. The paper also writes that the Albanian Helsinki Committee is asking the strict execution of the law regarding the terrorist act of February 26. [passage omitted]

REPUBLIKA carries an article "Capital Punishment Is Not a Reply But Also a Prophylaxis Against Terrorism." Under the headline "Analysis of Albanian Fragility," the paper carries the article "Bombs in Kosova, Zannone, and the Car Bomb in Tirana." [passage omitted]

LAJMI I DITES writes that after the terrorist act of the black Monday [26 February], the international press has unhesitatingly denounced the macabre act, which is qualified as a political work carried out by former secret police. [passage omitted]

TRIBUNA DEMOKRATIKE carries commentaries by Democratic Party Secretary General Tritan Shehu about the terrorist act and Socialist Party [PS] proposal for a gathering, under the headline "Prior to a Formal Denunciation of the Act... the PS Should First Set Itself Free From Crime." [passage omitted]

ALBANIA, under the headline "Most Recent Reports on the Terrorist Act on February 26," carries an article entitled "Leaflets After the Massacre: Leftists Attack Berisha." [passage omitted]

LIRIA carries articles entitled "Light To Be Thrown on the Crime," "An Act Which Accuses." [passage omitted]

"Car Bomb in the Capital, Ugly Act of Criminal Circles," writes SINDIKALISTI. [passage omitted]

"Bomb After an Interview of Vefa President Against Socialists" writes DITA INFORMACION which reports that in a recent interview with Albania, Vefa president has said that I am not socialist and I cannot support socialists.

GAZETA SHQIPTARE writes that Interior Minister Agron Musaraj has met with police chiefs and reports that the indentikit will be distributed in cities.

Albania: Press Views Berisha's 'Decline'

AU0103150596 Tirana KOHA JONE in Albanian 25 Feb 96 p 3

[Commentary by Frrok Cupi: "Time for the Future President To Appear"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the political space created by a free society, it is no heresy to bring forward not merely

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one but dozens of competing candidates for president. Albania, maintained for decades under the inviolable power of its number one, has not given its citizens a chance to acquire a liberal education in looking at the head of state. This political and social backwardness might help the devoted careerists or political eunuchs who shelter under the president's wings without even his knowledge and who will start wailing and insulting me publicly as soon as they see this article's title. For these people, how can another person replace the president tomorrow? It is curious that these sorts of people have been brought to the fore by the president, only to do him the most harm. In fact, the Albanian president's daring in exercising virtually untrammeled power (even over newspapers, churches, mosques, permits for kiosks, the courts, and the imprisonment or starvation of a political opponent) has been encouraged not by the talents but by the limitations of people who egg him on with cries of "Bravo," as if in a stadium. There is another problem—nobody in a democratic society says that an elected president should lose his position arbitrarily. But a democracy and a civil society demand that dozens of alternatives should be put to the vote. Political developments in Albania have come to this.

The President Is Burning His Last Candle

Something unpleasant and unexpected has been happening to our president as a person and our state as an institution since the day Berisha was elected after the "democratic revolution." Instead of approximating ever more closely a law-governed state, and demonstrating that the office of president and its incumbent were growing in stature, the opposite has occurred. President Berisha has daily lost a little of the people's confidence. Those whom he himself has given "entrance tickets" conduct polls and show that he will win, but this is nonsense. The balance between the government and the president today has reached the stage that this often criticized government would be acceptable with a different president, but no government however good could be accepted under President Berisha. Berisha's enthusiasm has become that tedious. The campaign for the referendum on the constitution, which was lost precisely because of the president's rallies, was decisive.

Another reason for his decline has been the state radio and television, which day by day bored the people with an excitable, stern, biased president obsessed with enemies and Socialists. Moreover, his party has encouraged Berisha's decline. Look at how they behave, led by Shehu, who is accused by the Socialists of being a yokel. They sleep like little lambs and wake up only when Berisha takes a wrong turn, such as in his adventure with the Genocide Law. Then they wake up and shout and urge the president toward worse. In cafes and when visiting neighbors, they tell a different story. "That's the way he is. Let him get on with it." By impelling him toward dangers, they have pushed the president into a most delicate position of boundless power. For good or ill, everything belongs to Berisha.

The Democratic Party [PD] is now prepared to march Berisha into an electoral campaign. This will be an opportunity for even his closest associates to gather round the television and recognize in every news broadcast that Berisha has accomplished his mission, but is himself finished. But what does the opposition do? The sacrifice of Berisha and the end of his original presidential experiment have created an opportunity for the opposition. It has nothing to lose. It is now clear how a senior political figure can use himself up. The opposition knows which of its leaders Berisha has attacked most, just as it knows what its primary values are. The opposition must therefore tell the electorate who its presidential candidates are.

Ordinary Mass Demands Have Been Met

When people discuss the current situation before the election campaign, they often say "These people have not even been able to keep those who used to be with them." This is doubtless a stubborn fact. People no longer rally in squares or gather round cars with green license plates. Dr. Berisha walks from Brrake to the block where A. and T. Shehu have their houses, and nobody turns his head under the pressure of emotion. There is no need to analyze this as love or lack of love for the PD. We have no need to treat human beings so roughly as some parties do when their blood is up. What has happened is that the people's ordinary mass demands have been met. It was these demands that drove people to gather in squares and to acts of vandalism. But they have now long been forgotten. Society has moved on, while the team that was born out of these initial mass demands has remained in the same place. This is the source of the conflict that makes people say "These people have not even been able to keep those who used to be with them." It is now very late to solve this conflict. The reasons for this are that the government formed by Berisha is now no longer able to do anything but nervously repeat political slogans.

The second argument, that the president needs a government of simple expectations in order to crush it more easily, no longer holds good. The third reason is that the kind of relationship has been created between the government and the president in which the president is there to stand for the government and the government is there to sign for the president. A change of gov-

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ernment, which is a necessary democratic demand, will cause problems for the president himself.

The PD is trying to win the elections precisely in order to maintain the gap between an outmoded government and the electorate's sophisticated rather than ordinary and mass demands, a gap that leaves the country ungoverned. If the government is to have a chance in the political arena after the elections, it will have to cope with demands that are equal to or beyond those of society at large. It will owe nothing to the ignorance and wretchedness of the current administration. The PD government has been sufficient to disgust plump and ignorant civil servants and to require professionalism in the administration. It is fortunate that this situation has arisen now, when specialists are standing by in the opposition. It has not be said, but this situation is one that might call for money "out of nowhere," which would lead to a PD victory. Meanwhile, people who could manage the state and the economy are in opposition. The opposition has only to announce their names for them to say who will be the next president.

The Opposition Has Gained Political Ground

What would have happened two years ago if the opposition had demanded to govern the country, or still worse, had tried to announce presidential candidates? This was a chilly period with an almost total absence of political pluralism. If the opposition had done such a thing, this would have provided "fodder" for the govenment and would have restricted its own political leeway. The government then had in its hand the bogus card of anticommunism and antisocialism. This card has now been used up. Western civilization has demonstrated that it not only does not despise but accepts socialist governments. Throughout eastern Europe, opponents of the "Democrats" have won one after another.

We are now standing on a threshold previously crossed by Russia and Hungary. After the elections, we may find ourselves in the political position in which they are today. The president will belong to the defeated Democrats, while the government will belong to the new victors. This situation, as is well known, has caused major problems to these other countries, until it has been solved. As long as Albania is heading down the same road, it becomes even more natural that not only the names of future deputies and ministers, but also that of the future president, should be mentioned during the election campaign. No political party can now be accused over ghosts from the past. The Albanian opposition parties are under the protection of international institutions because of the repression of the state, and each of them has its own achievements and physiognomy, besides the honor of daring to lay a claim to governing the country from the very top of the pyramid.

An Opposition Without Presidential Candidates Is Not Credible

Berisha and the PD have currently created a situation with totally false demands. See how the political engine produces some new sensation every day, either the Anti-Genocide Law, or the arrest of a former official, or a Zannoni, or a journalist's notepad... If you notice, there is a sensation every day, even if it is only a little one. Do you believe them? It is unimaginable that the opposition at any rate takes them as true, because this would mean we had no players on the political stage. The government is creating sensations simply in order to make noise. One of its purposes is to distract the opposition's attention so that it does not have time and energy to think about serious matters like a presidential candidate. In fact, the opposition parties are at present waiting for one of their leaders to be imprisoned or to face further accusations, but this does not constitute political activity. Even if it were shown that this person had done wonderful work so far, this would still not constitute political activity on the part of the opposition. On the threshold of the elections, political activity means telling the people what manifesto you have and which people will manage the state. An opposition that does not put forward its candidate to succeed the president who is pulling the wires of the state cannot be very credible. All the opposition voters will be voting for change, not just for a spring cleaning. Berisha, when he complains he is being attacked by the opposition, is sitting comfortably. He has assumed the right to tell foreigners and the Albanians that he is the only person who can be president, as long as the opposition has not put any name forward to its own electorate. The word "president" in their mouths would have a literal meaning but would also imply that the opposition is preparing to shoulder great tasks. Thus the opposition would become more credible.

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Czech Republic: Klaus on Belgrade's Role in Achieving Peace

LD0403111196 Belgrade TANJUG in English 0954 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prague, March 4 (TANJUG)—Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus has said that he highly regards Yugoslavia's role in achieving peace in Bosnia and that his country backs Yugoslavia's return to world organizations where he said it belonged.

Klaus, who arrives on an official visit to Yugoslavia Monday, told TANJUG Friday that Belgrade's positions had made it possible to find a compromise and reach peace settlements, and said Yugoslavia would play a crucial role in the peace process also in the future.

Klaus said only the initial step had been taken in an overall resolution of the crisis. He said he believed it would be much harder to erase hatred from the minds of the people who had been affected and divided by civil war in such a tragic way than to end the war.

The Czech Republic is willing to contribute as much as it can to a successful conclusion of the peace process, he said.

He expressed understanding for the plight of the former Yugoslavia's peoples during big political and economic changes triggered by the collapse of communism in the 1980s.

He said he had always underlined that it was wrong to blame one party only in the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, because he had been aware of the complexity of that period. He said his country had undergone a similar experience.

Commenting on common as well as other causes that had led to the disintegrations of Czechoslovakia and the former Yugoslavia, Klaus said that, unfortunately, it was a fact that neither of the federations had survived the collapse of communism.

He said there were many reasons why the disintegration of Czechoslovakia, unlike that of the former Yugoslavia, had been peaceful, giving two of them.

The Czech lands and Slovakia were not burdened by their past conflicts, while in the case of the former Yugoslavia, they triggered such intense mistrust and hatred among its peoples. Also, the minority and territorial issues were not essential in relations between the Czech lands and Slovakia, he said.

Another important fact is that, once it had become aware of Slovakia's determination to become a sovereign and independent state, the Czech lands settled the matter through negotiations, minimising the harm to both sides arising from a move to this effect, he said.

The Czech Republic and Slovakia decided to negotiate the matter themselves, without mediation by a third party or external pressure, and their forming in such a way resulted in the respect of the agreed solutions, he said.

The disintegration of the former Yugoslavia did not take this course, he said. It was primarily triggered by unilateral steps by some parties and spontaneous developments that had opened room for foreign involvement that only compounded the situation, he said.

Referring to a resumption of economic cooperation with Yugoslavia, Klaus said Czech companies were ready to help recover the Yugoslav economy affected by the U.N. Security Council sanctions. He said they wanted to resume cooperation with Yugoslav partners in all spheres.

Klaus said he hoped his visit to Belgrade, the first following the disintegrations of Czechoslovakia and the former Yugoslavia, would help intensify contacts between the two countries.

Czech Republic: Klaus on Talks With Poland's Cimoszewicz

LD0303195396 Prague Radiozurnal Radio Network in Czech 1700 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our correspondent Miroslav Karas interviewed Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus about the significance of his talks with Polish Prime Minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz:

[Begin recording] [Klaus] Their significance is given by the need to speak to each other, to get to know each other on personal level, because this makes tackling very complicated problems much easier. I think this meeting was very useful and that we opened a number of issues and agreed upon a number of things. It was a working meeting dealing with practical issues, and our talks concerned specific matters and were useful.

[Karas] Cimoszewicz is the fourth Polish prime minister you are meeting as Czech prime minister. Poland views the current relations with us as very dynamic. Do you agree with this?

[Klaus] I would go as far as to describe them as being the best ever Czech-Polish relations. I am very happy about this, and I hope that, during the past few years, I contributed to this state of affairs a bit. I do not see any problem in Czech-Polish relations. [end recording]

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Czech Republic: Polish Prime Minister on NATO

LD0103193896 Prague Radiozurnal Radio Network in Czech 1700 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz and Vaclav Klaus, the prime ministers of Poland and the Czech Republic, will meet on 3 March. The Polish prime minister granted an exclusive interview to a Czech Radio correspondent in Warsaw about the two countries's common interests. One of the issues of common interest is the two countries' endeavor to join the European structures. Jaroslav Karas asked the Polish prime minister:

[Karas] In the past few weeks, official circles in Warsaw have been talking more often about the efforts to pursuade Russia as far as the issue of Poland's admission to the alliance [NATO] is concerned. Therefore, I asked whether this meant that Warsaw wanted Russia to become one of the partners in the discussion about the alliance's expansion.

[Cimoszewicz in Polish, fading to Slovak report] [Passage omitted] We talk about the necessity of holding talks with Russia because it is a country with a very important position in this part of the world. At the same time, we believe that Russia should not talk about [the possibility of using] the veto. The problems of our country's security and sovereignty are dealt with in Warsaw, and no one has the right to interfere. We still remember the time when the relationship between Poland and the then Soviet Union was not one of partnership. Therefore, we are against the return of this type of relationship, Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz said.

[Karas] Moscow has said very clearly that it is opposed to NATO's eastward expansion. Does Warsaw want to succeed in pursuading [Russia] on its own, or does it expect someone's help?

[Cimoszewicz] There are various voices and views coming from Russia. The truth is that, lately, on several occasions, President Yeltsin did speak very strongly against NATO's expansion. At the same time, Foreign Minister Primakov said publicly that Russia could not have the right of veto. One must take into consideration that, in a few months' time, there will be presidential elections in Russia and that now is a very special time. Therefore, we should assess the various views and statements from this point of view.

Who do we rely on most of all? We are convinced that the alliance's expansion is a historical necessity. The world has changed. Europe has changed. The past division into two camps does not exist anymore. Therefore, we must look for new security structures for our continent. And the most suitable structure at present is NATO, the Polish prime minister says.

Czech Republic: Havel on Ambassadorial Appointment to Russia

LD0303155596 Prague Radiozurnal Radio Network in Czech 1315 GMT 3 Mar 96

[Interview with Czech President Vaclav Havel by correspondent Robert Tamchyna in Lany on 3 March; from the "Conversations at Lany" program—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Correspondent Robert Tamchyna] Last week there were some changes of your personnel at Prague Castle, including senior officials at the Presidential Office. The departure of Lubos Dobrovsky, head of the Presidential Office, to become Czech ambassador to Russia is one of these changes. What were your feelings on parting with the former head of your office?

[Havel] I have to admit that I strongly recommended this change to him. I, of course, put state interests above the interests of my office, and, in my view, in this period he is the right man to serve the Czech Republic well in the Russian Federation. At the time of forthcoming Russian presidential elections, this diplomatic post is probably one of the most demanding.

I think he is capable to doing this job well and that, in carrying out his mission there, he will be more useful to our Republic than here. This is why, despite losing his services for my office as a result, I am very grateful to him that in the end he accepted the posting offered him by the Foreign Ministry.

[Tamchyna] Speaking about Russia, Mr. President, I would like to ask you about your reaction to the remark made by the spokesman for President Yeltsin, Sergey Medvedev, that playwright Havel is turning the issues surrounding East European countries' access to NATO structures into some sort of a drama.

[Havel] [chuckles] I have to say that on hearing this report on television, I was rather pleased that the Kremlin does listen to my "Conversations at Lany." [passage omitted]

Czech Republic: SD-LSNS Deputies Club Splits From Party

AU0103214796 Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech 29 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Andrea Kabelova: "The SD-LSNS Deputies Club Has Broken Away From Its Party"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prague—The Free Democrats-Liberal National Social Party [SD-LSNS] Deputies Club

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has backed its chairman, Tomas Sterba, whom the party's leadership had intended to expel. "Not one of my colleagues wants to be in the SD-LSNS any longer," said Sterba yesterday. He refused to be expelled from the party and left of his own accord.

He also said that the six-member deputies faction has decided to rename itself the Civic National Movement Deputies Club. This means that the party of Jiri Dienstbier and Vavrinec Bodenlos no longer has representatives in the Chamber.

"The possibilities for our cooperation with the SD-LSNS were exhausted owing to the behavior of some people in the party leadership. Political sectarianism has prevented constructive cooperation and integration with other political parties and personalities from the center and has replaced them with theatrical performances involving LOK [Doctors Trade Union Club] Chairman David Rath and the chairman of the businessmen's union, Rudolf Baranek," declares the new deputies club in its statement. At the moment, of course, the club does not represent a registered party or movement, although the situation could be different after today—that is, the club is planning a news conference but is not revealing who will appear at it apart from the deputies. However, it is not out of the question that they will want to introduce to the public the political entity they intend to represent in parliament.

So far, the statement has not been signed by Miroslav Raska, who is in Australia, and Miroslav Kasparek. According to Sterba, he was not present; Bodenlos claims, however, that Kasparek does not intend to leave the SD-LSNS.

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Slovakia: Prime Minister Comments on Russian Relations

LD0103192696 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1737 GMT 1 Mar 96

["Regular Friday interview" with Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar by Bibiana Gunisova on 1 March; place not given—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Gunisova] Yesterday you met Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov. What is in your view the impact of his visit to Slovakia, taking into account that in a month's time there will be the European Union's summit in Turin to discuss the EU's enlargement? [passage omitted]

[Meciar] It is important to realize that Russia's weight in world and European developments and in multilateral relations will be increased substantially once it renews its economic strength.

It is also important to take into account our interest in good bilateral relations with Russia, which concentrate on economic cooperation and are not aimed against anybody. These relations are good, though both sides are aware of great room for growth in this sphere.

As regards the security structures, Foreign Minister Primakov clearly said that our views on these issues differed but that this was Slovakia's internal matter. Russia does not have right of veto and has discussed these matters with us within the framework of global and bilateral relations. However, Russia does not veto our efforts. It does not have the right to do so and does not claim to have it.

As regards security (?structures), there are too many complicated issues to expect them to be solved by Slovakia and Russia. These matters involve world and European global interests, the structures of NATO and the CIS, and they concern central European states searching for their place in the newly formed structure. This structure should not be formed without taking into account the interests of all parties. Otherwise, there is a danger of a new polarization in Europe, leading to a new polarization and global division of the world.

This is clearly nobody's intention. All of us still remember vividly the enormous human and material cost of the bipolar division. It would not make any sense to return to that state of affairs. [passage omitted]

Slovakia: Defense Minister Discusses NATO, Home Guard

AU0103185996 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 29 Feb 96 p 9

[Interview with Slovak Defense Minister Jan Sitek by Juraj Alner and Martin Hric; place and date not given: "With Defense Minister J. Sitek on Slovakia's Entry Into NATO, Arms Exports, and Other Issues"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [NARODNA OBRODA] Mr. Minister, the defense department ranks first in a public opinion poll on confidence in institutions, which certainly pleases you. The government as a whole ranks considerably lower. How do you explain this?

[Sitek] The Army is implementing the government program thoroughly, especially as far as its apolitical nature is concerned. The department has good relations with the press. All of our steps are clear. I make unannounced visits to units so that I have an undistorted view of the situation. During my foreign visits, I try to create scope for the export of our arms products. Today, for example, a working model of our remote control mine-removing device, Bozena, is on its way to Canada. And, finally, we are paying full attention to the social, especially housing or apartment, issues of concern to army staff.

[NARODNA OBRODA] Incorporation into the European security structures is a vital issue for Slovakia. Russia's stance on NATO's enlargement toward the East is known. Where do you see a way out of this dispute?

[Sitek] Our orientation toward NATO—in harmony with the government program—is unequivocal, which all of our Western partners appreciate. True, entry into NATO is also a complicated issue in view of the fact that 16 parliaments have to approve it, and the right of veto applies. Nevertheless, it is hard to imagine balancing the security situation in Europe, especially in Central Europe, without Russia. NATO members are also aware of this. [NARODNA OBRODA] For this very reason, the Swedes have come up with an initiative proposal: to increase the jurisdiction and capability for action of the Partnership for Peace in which all of the decisive forces in Europe are members.

[Sitek] The advantage of this institution is that states cooperate within it at various hierarchical levels, starting with a troop and going all the way up to the prime ministers through the general staffs. This intensifies mutual trust. But, increasing the jurisdiction of the partnership so that, in certain issues, it is a substitute for NATO is a matter for politico-strategic analyses and

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agreement among the states at levels higher than the defense ministers.

[NARODNA OBRODA] NATO Headquarters in Brussels considers the issue of admitting new members to be a matter for complex strategic planning. A state's entry into the EU is, as a rule, bound by a referendum in the appropriate country, but not entry into NATO. We have encountered the view in our country more than once that we should hold a referendum on entry into NATO.

[Sitek] The issue of our entry into NATO, as I have already said, is not an issue for today. We fulfill five of the conditions so far, which our foreign partners acknowledge. This is not, however, the whole parcel of conditions, which we do not know yet. I think—and, according to the statements in the press, the same view is also held by the chairmen of the coalition parliamentary parties—that entry into NATO is such an important issue that it should be decided upon in a referendum.

[NARODNA OBRODA] The size of our Army is below the level set by the Vienna Convention. Despite this, it still has the highest number of senior officers. Has the discharge of officers come to an end or will it continue?

[Sitek] The ratio of officers and warrant officers in advanced armies everywhere is 1:2. In our country, the ratio is the opposite as a consequence of the socialist system of automatic promotion with the number of years served. We have to approach the global ideal gradually. We are not doing this by forceful means. Many officers are leaving after reaching the age limit. I also insist on the fulfillment of the physical fitness norms. It creates a major problem for us if we have to transfer a surplus officer from a senior post to a junior one—he should go down with his salary. True, many of the officers that we would need are leaving for the private sector. They are highly qualified managers, supervisory staff. A private businessman will sportingly pay the Army the difference for the years not served in return for a ready-made professional and will offer him a disproportionately more attractive salary.

[NARODNA OBRODA] In some states, Army officers were or are, so to speak, on the pedestal of demigods, in others they are ashamed of their uniforms and prefer to slip into civilian clothes immediately they leave the barracks. Where are we on this scale?

[Sitek] Probably in the lower one-third. In many states, a general has a limousine assigned to him for life with a chauffeur, a batman, and an official villa; there is even a sign on the elevator "For Generals Only." When one of our senior military officials goes abroad, it is with a manifestation of supreme confidence that his partner invites him to his apartment—and he has to reciprocate in our country. A general from our Army has to reciprocate with an invitation to a prefabricated apartment house and the partner is at a loss about whether, for example, he should use the apartment house's elevator. We would like to resolve this in the long run by constructing separate homes for General Staff officers.

[NARODNA OBRODA] Is this not too unorthodox with regard to other officers who travel endless distances to see their families, live in boarding houses, and long for the aforementioned prefabricated apartment?

[Sitek] As I have already said, we are also paying priority attention to these issues. We are transferring every koruna we are able to assign to resolving social issues—and apartments for the officers or making conditions for soldiers in basic service more civilized dominate here—to this purpose.

[NARODNA OBRODA] From here? After all, the Army is complaining that it does not even have the money to maintain its equipment!

[Sitek] We have transferred the money from the sale and scrapping of hardware to apartment construction. For this year, apart from the sum reserved for apartments from the defense budget, we have obtained another 200 million korunas [Sk] for this purpose from extrabudgetary sources. We cannot tolerate ad infinitum the prospective necessary career soldiers leaving us because of this.

[NARODNA OBRODA] As we are already at the budget, how did you divide the Sk13.588 billion from the state budget into individual chapters?

[Sitek] We had to define a hierarchy. First of all, we have to cover fully salaries, basic supplies of materials, training tasks, automobile hardware, combat firing, our international commitments, and the aforementioned social sphere. We have nothing for development programs. We have to look for other funds to bring in the Zuzana howitzer, the modernized T-72 tank, and other projects.

[NARODNA OBRODA] That is our next question: In connection with Zuzana—whose export would bring us hundreds of millions if, it is true, we introduce it in our Army—there is, apparently, already a project for financing it. At what stage is it? Is it to involve integrating the resources of the ministry, the producers, the arms holding, exporters, and others?

[Sitek] If Dubnica completes the enterprise and control tests, we will carry out operative army tests. In order to test its maximum range, we have to fire the weapon from a civilian area so that the impact of the shells is in

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our test areas. We have minimal opportunities, however, for finalizing production; I think that the producers and exporters—at the cost of bank credits—should take part more markedly in financing. These invested funds are highly returnable.

[NARODNA OBRODA] Mr. Minister, there are still certain ambiguities in home guard issues. Apart from the construction of the headquarters, are the soldiers in basic service also already training in Zilina? Why here exactly? Is there a legislative brake against misusing the home guard for political purposes?

[Sitek] Thirty-seven companies, which, in essence, copy the structure of the District Military Administrations, are being considered for the home guard. Six home guard brigades will be mobile so that they can be deployed as required. According to the law, the home guard will protect facilities of special importance, power-generating facilities, important areas, drinking water sources, and other facilities in the interior. Since, in the event of a conflict, Slovak Army units would be deployed on the line of combat, the interior would not be covered. Therefore, the function of the home guard is irreplaceable, as it is in a large number of Western states.

[NARODNA OBRODA] And, measures against misuse—for example, to make sure that the home guard is not deployed in Komarno against the congress of Hungarian teachers?

[Sitek] Two circumstances rule this out. Only the organizational cores of the aforementioned brigades exist and the company commanders are being detailed in the District Military Administrations. But, the companies and brigades will be supplemented from the reserves to full strength exclusively in the event that a threat to the state is declared. And, the units will be subordinate only to the Army General Staff, not to local functionaries as some people assume.

[NARODNA OBRODA] Are the home guard soldiers in basic service already in training? Why in Zilina exactly?

[Sitek] I have come across the opinion that the training center is in Zilina because of Mr. Slota [Slovak National Party chairman and Zilina's mayor]. This is nonsense. There was, by coincidence, free space here after the housing and training facilities of the abolished military college were vacated. Soldiers in basic service are also getting ready here for the home guard.

Slovakia: Newspapers Report Kovac's Visit to Nove Zamky

AU0103200696

[FBIS Report] Slovak newspapers on 28 and 29 February publish correspondents' reports on President Kovac's two-day visit to Nove Zamky district. The reports contrast the "cordial welcome" accorded to the president in Hungarian-populated communities with the hostile reception in Surany, a town with a Slovak majority. They also pay attention to the boycott of the visit by the political leadership of Nove Zamky district and to President Kovac's comments on the ethnic minority issue and the kidnapping of his son.

Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak on 28 February on page 2 carries a 600-word report by Olga Prekopova entitled "Powers of Self-Administration Bodies More Important Than Seats of Civil Servants." The report notes that President Kovac started his two-day visit to Nove Zamky district in Sturovo, a town at the Slovak-Hungarian border in which ethnic Hungarians represent 72 percent of the population. According to PRAVDA, the president received a "very cordial welcome" from about 300 residents of the town, who had assembled "under a large banner proclaiming 'Hold Out, Mr. President, Truth Will Prevail.'" Moving to the president's meeting with Sturovo aldermen, the PRAVDA report says: "At the meeting, which took place in an atmosphere of understanding, Michal Kovac stressed that everyone without difference should feel at home in this state. In his opinion, members of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia should not have to live under conditions such as those experienced by the Slovak minority in the Hungarian Republic. However, Slovaks in the south, who often are the minority here (in Sturovo, for example, 72 percent of the population is of Hungarian nationality), must not live under pressure either. The president affirmed the validity of his commitment that, should existing laws concerning the use of the minorities' languages not be respected, he is ready to submit the language law to the Constitutional Court for scrutiny. As expected, the territorial and administrative arrangement was also discussed at the meeting. Reacting to the demand of mayors of the Sturovo subdistrict [obvod], which is also backed by a petition, that Sturovo become a district capital, the president said: 'I do not underestimate the importance of decisions on future seats of civil servants, but what I consider to be of the greatest importance is the expansion of the powers of self-administration bodies and the creation of higher-level self-administration bodies. Unfortunately, these issues are not being discussed."

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Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak on 29 February on pages 1 and 2 carries a 600-word report by Olga Prekopova on the second day of the president's visit to Nove Zamky district, entitled "President Was Calling for Greater Tolerance." Prekopova opens her report by saying: "'Phooey! Shame! Resign! Quit!,' such and similar exclamations and sharp whistling mixed with applause welcomed President Michal Kovac and his spouse Emilia yesterday shortly after lunch at Surany, the last stop of his working visit to Nove Zamky district. Portraits of Meciar and Gasparovic appeared above the heads of some citizens. Following the cordial welcome in Sturovo and the interest shown by the residents of Nove Zamky in a meeting with Michal Kovac on 27 February, the reception in front of the Surany City Hall was like a cold shower." Nevertheless, the president reportedly told the PRAVDA correspondent that he was satisfied with the visit. Replying to another question from the PRAVDA correspondent, concerning the fact that the chairman of the Nove Zamky District Office did not receive the president during his visit, Michal Kovac reportedly said: "I am sorry that such abnormalities have been introduced into our life that the prime minister instructs district office chairmen not to meet the president. I do not know of any other state in the world where something like that would happen. I feel sorry for the people who are ready to lose face by obeying this undemocratic, foolish instruction and letting themselves be guided by it." According to the PRAVDA report, while in Surany, Kovac received about 15 of the 69 inhabitants of Surany who had signed a protest against the president's visit to their town. Speaking about this meeting, Prekopova says: "The signatories' questions at this meeting were partially reasonable and partially emotional. 'If there are some problems in coexistence between the state-forming nation and the minorities, they have to be solved by the appropriate state bodies and the government. Difficulties based on emotions should be smoothed in a dialogue,' Michal Kovac stressed. However, the conclusion of the meeting was rather bewildering because, after one of the participants dissociated himself from the views of the key signatory of the protest, the majority of the president's opponents left the hall."

On the same day, on page 2, in the "One Question" column, Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak publishes President Michal Kovac's reply to Olga Prekopova's question in Surany about his reaction to Slovak Information Service (SIS) Director Ivan Lexa's decision to "file charges against the president because of his statements about the SIS's participation in the abduction of Michal Kovac Jr. to Austria." Kovac's reply reads: "I will first wait for the suit because I must see on what it is based. Only then will I react. But should this lawsuit really be filed, I will welcome it because I am convinced that I have enough arguments to convince [the court] in this civil suit that I did not wrong, slander, or offend anyone, but that I was speaking the truth as I know it."

Bratislava SME in Slovak on 29 February on page 1, under the headline "President Was Speaking With Citizens Who Did Not Want Him," carries a 500-word report by Igor Stupnan on President Kovac's meeting with the signatories of the protest against his visit to Surany. The report states, among other things: "The first to speak was the resident of a nearby village who said that Slovaks and Hungarians were on good terms but that Hungarian deputies were visiting the village and brainwashing the locals. 'If we did not have this coalition government, we would have autonomy here,' she declared. In his reaction Michal Kovac stated that we must not proceed on the basis of impressions and emotions but in conformity with the Constitution of the Slovak Republic. It is his duty as president of the republic to defend the interests of all citizens of the Slovak Republic, including members of ethnic minorities. Another citizen saw the Michal Kovac Jr. affair as a consequences of society's destabilization. The SIS is in good hands, in her opinion. 'How can Carnogursky say that there are StB [State Security] members in the SIS?' According to her words, the truth will out that the kidnapping had been organized by Carnogursky and the opposition. It is a pity that the Austrian judiciary lent credence to M. Kovac Jr., his father, the president, and Oskar F. [SIS agent who confessed his participation in the abduction]. 'There will not be peace in Slovakia until you resign,' she said in conclusion. In his reply to this statement the president said that he sees no reason to resign because public opinion polls demonstrate citizens' confidence in him. 'How do you know who kidnapped my son?! Someone made you believe something and you take it as God's word,' the president stressed. Michal Kovac said that he, too, deplores the tensions between himself and the prime minister. Although his previous attempts to meet the prime minister were unsuccessful, he will approach the prime minister again."

Slovakia: 2d SIS Officer Named in Kovac Case

AU0103144996 Prague LIDOVE NOVINY in Czech 29 Feb 96 p 8

[Article by Vladimir Misauer and Pavlina Spalena: "Journalists Under the Spotlight"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Slovak secret service is keeping some journalists under surveillance in connection with the kidnapping of Michal Kovac Jr. This is apparent from the testimony of a former Slovak Infor-

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mation Service [SIS] officer obtained by the NOVA TV program "With His Own Eyes."

"They started to work on journalists following the kidnapping of Kovac Jr. In essence, on those who had taken an interest in this case and were writing about it," claims the former member of the SIS's 46th Surveillance Section, who refused to reveal his name. According to him, one of the journalists kept under most surveillance in connection with this affair was SME editor Peter Toth. "We kept a watch on Toth mainly because of Oskar F., with whom the SIS wanted to get in touch. The daily had published Oskar's testimony and, therefore, it was assumed that we would get on Oskar's trail through Toth."

Oskar F. was the first SIS officer to admit publicly that he had taken part in the kidnapping of the president's son. The former SIS officer claimed that Oskar F. is a former colleague of his from the SIS "surveillance unit." Apropos Oskar F.'s admission, he says: "There is no reason not to believe Oskar, because no one would make up such a thing."

The second former secret service agent to decide to reveal what is happening behind the scenes in the SIS said that he personally did not take part in the kidnapping of the president's son. "We were divided into two groups; some of us worked on Kovac Jr. and the others worked on Chilo-Ptak." The former SIS officer comments on the situation that arose in the secret service after Kovac's abduction: "What has now been published in the newspapers has meant that approximately 75 percent of the people from the surveillance unit are becoming useless. It is necessary to abolish the whole thing and start again. It is possible that the StB [State Security] did not do as much in 30 years as these people have done in one year," says the former SIS officer. According to him, his former colleagues from the surveillance section are now afraid to open their newspapers. "They are afraid that they will come across a description of them or their car there. They are afraid of one another," says the former SIS officer, who was discharged from the service last November after working there for two years. "They discharged about 10 of us after the kidnapping," says the now unemployed former officer who decided to come forward, because he does not agree with the "SIS being misused for political purposes."

Slovakia: SIS Chief's Possible Replacement Suggested

AU0403143896 Bratislava SME in Slovak 28 Feb 96 p 4

[Commentary by Peter Toth: "About the SIS Director's Intentions"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Latest information leaked from the Slovak Information Service [SIS] environment suggests that its director, Ivan Lexa, has reached the end of the road. Leaving aside Lexa's scandalous lawsuit against the president of the Slovak Republic due to his statements made before the Austrian court, information has leaked from Lexa's surroundings about his order to collect all public pronouncements of Michal Kovac since March 1996. They are to be analyzed by the SIS Analytical Department and the 26th SIS Department (Legal Department). A so-called investigation file against the president has been opened at the SIS Counterintelligence for this purpose. Two facts are worthy of attention: 1) The investigation file against Michal Kovac has been opened despite the fact that the SIS has no investigative authority. 2) The order to collect all of the president's speeches and to open the file was issued by Ivan Lexa one day after the verdict of the Higher Provincial Court in Vienna that it was impossible to extradite Michal Kovac Jr. to Germany.

It is evident that the secret service director is unable to dispel suspicions of SIS participation in the abduction of the president's son and is therefore preparing another counterattack, which is designed to cover up this fact. If, despite the information leak about the opening of the file directed against the president, Ivan Lexa decides to bring this operation to an end, we can expect that the prime minister (or someone else) will again appear before Parliament with weighty "revelations" (just like before the publication of the OKO [parliamentary body for supervising secret service activities] report, full of figures from the animal and vegetable kingdoms [reference to codenames used in the May 1995 "secret OKO report"]), which will serve as the basis for "demonstrating" the president's treacherous intentions. It is becoming apparent that, apart from this game, the secret service chief has launched another parallel operation to rid himself of responsibility for all the tricks performed by the SIS under his leadership. He wants to be "kicked up" to the post of Slovak ambassador to Moscow where he could continue boosting the "above-standard" relations with Russia he is developing in his current post. The SIS director's officially blessed escape to Moscow would suit not only Lexa but the prime minister as well. The president, who has to sign the

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appointment of ambassadors, should not make the lives of the two gentlemen easier by his signature, however.

[The possibility of Ivan Lexa leaving the post of SIS director is mentioned also in a 600-word article by Karol Wolf, entitled "Developments Around Kovac's Kidnapping Portend Political Bang," in Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech on 29 February on page 9. Wolf, who is Bratislava correspondent of the Czech daily, notes that after an independent Austrian court "legally confirmed" testimonies that identified Ivan Lexa as the "organizer" of the kidnapping of the president' son, a "political earthquake of an unprecedented intensity" could erupt in Bratislava. In this context Wolf writes: "One evidence of Lexa's increasingly deteriorating position in Slovakia is the report that the secret service director is interested in the post of ambassador to Moscow. Lexa's transfer to Moscow would most probably be welcomed also by Prime Minister Meciar, for whom it is increasingly difficult to defend abroad the fact that he has not recalled Lexa to date."]

Slovakia: Minister on Territorial Arrangement Bill

AU0403152196 Bratislava SME in Slovak 1 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by CTK: "L. Hudek Yesterday Presented the Final Draft of the Law on Territorial and Administrative Arrangement"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bratislava—Interior Minister Ludovit Hudek yesterday briefed correspondents on the final draft of the government-sponsored bill on the territorial and administrative arrangement of the Slovak Republic, under which Slovakia should consist in the future of eight regions [kraje] and 74 districts [okresy]. Under the proposal, Bratislava Region will consist of five districts in the capital, plus the districts of Malacky, Pezinok, and Senec. In Trnava Region, the draft foresees the districts of Trnava, Dunajska Streda, Galanta, Hlohovec, Skalica, Piestany, and Senica. Trencin Region will comprise the districts of Trencin, Banovce nad Bebravou, Ilava, Myjava, Nove Mesto nad Vahom, Partizanske, Povazska Bystrica, Prievidza, and Puchov. Nitra Region will comprise the districts of Nitra, Komarno, Levice, Nove Zamky, Sala, Topolcany, and Zlate Moravce. The following cities are to be district capitals in Zilina Region—Zilina, Bytca, Cadca, Dolny Kubin, Kysucke Nove Mesto, Liptovsky Mikulas, Martin, Namestovo, Ruzomberok, Turcianske Teplice, and Tvrdosin. In Banska Bystrica Region, the following districts are being considered—Banska Bystrica, Brezno, Krupina, Lucenec, Revuca, Rimavska Sobota, Velky Krtis, Zvolen, Zarnovica, Ziar nad Hronom, Detva, and Poltar. Presov Region is to consist of the districts of Presov, Bardejov, Humenne, Kezmarok, Levoca, Poprad, Sabinov, Snina, Stara Lubovna, Stropkov, Svidnik, and Vranov nad Toplou. And, finally, Kosice Region will comprise the districts of Kosice, Kosice-Environs, Krompachy, Michalovce, Roznava, Sobrance, Spisska Nova Ves, and Trebisov.

Slovakia: Ethnic Hungarian Parties' Oppose Regional Plan

LD0203191796 Budapest Duna TV in Hungarian 1700 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Slovak Government is expected to approve a bill on the new regional and administrative division of the country. The [ethnic] Hungarian parties are concerned over the bill that will adversely affect Hungarians, therefore they have submitted an alternative bill to parliament.

[Unidentified correspondent] The Interior Ministry plan wants to divide Slovakia into eight regions only. This means the proportion of Hungarians will decrease within the administrative units.

[Begin Pal Csaky recording, of the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement] After the next elections deputies from these new counties will get into parliament. If a majority election system is to be forcefully established, ad absurdum it may happen that Hungarians in Slovakia will not have parliamentary deputies. This will not only affect culture or language usage but, I am afraid, it will also lead to the impoverishment of the Hungarian-populated areas. That is why we are protesting this by every possible means. If the government is not willing to begin an effective dialogue we will turn to international organizations. [end recording]

[Correspondent] The basis for the proposal of the Hungarian coalition [of ethnic parties] proposal is the establishment of 16 regions with the preservation of the present districts, taking into consideration the economic, cultural, and language aspects.

Slovakia: Hungarian Theater Chief Dismissed

AU0103212096

[FBIS Report] Slovak newspapers on 29 February report extensively on the decision of Culture Minister Ivan Hudec to dismiss Peter Kolar, director of the Thalia Theater, a Hungarian-language theater in Kosice, effective 1 March. Some reports attribute Kolar's dismissal to his recent appointment as secretary general of CSEMADOK, a Hungarian minority organization, and to his appeal to Hungarian President Arpad Goncz for financial assistance to the theater.

Bratislava SME in Slovak on 29 February on page 3 carries a 600-word report by "eb," entitled "Dismissed

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Thalia Director Peter Kolar is CSEMADOK Secretary General." The report quotes Peter Kolar, who has reportedly been director of the Kosice theater for 6 years, as having told SME that "from the viewpoint of the Ministry of Culture, the main reason for my dismissal was alleged wasteful use of financial resources. This is not true, however. Our theater operates under specific conditions because we mostly perform outside Kosice, which naturally increases our operating costs. This was not reflected in our budget, however, which kept decreasing." According to Kolar, late last year the financial situation of the theater "reached a critical stage" (the 1995 budget was reportedly only 70 percent of the 1993 budget), which is why he asked Hungarian President Arpad Goncz for help. "President Goncz tried to help us through foundations and subsequently, we received a sum of approximately 400,000 Slovak korunas. I am afraid that the Ministry of Culture considered this an act of 'high treason,'" Kolar is quoted as saying.

The SME report also includes the following passage: "According to some sources, behind the dismissal of Peter Kolar is also the fact that, at a meeting of the CSEMADOK Central Committee on 10 February, he was elected CSEMADOK secretary general. The dismissed director did not want to comment on this. He did mention, however, that he will discharge the duties of secretary general." Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak on 29 February on page 2 carries a 300-word report by CTK and TASR on Kolar's dismissal. The report states that, while Minister of Culture Ivan Hudec did not give any reasons for Kolar's dismissal, "in Kolar's opinion it is evident that it was, among other things, a reaction to the request for financial support of the theater that he, Kolar, addressed to Hungarian President Arpad Goncz late last year. According to the minister's alleged pronouncement, Kolar 'had no right' to do this." Kolar is also quoted as having told CTK that his dismissal will not solve the theater's financial problems and that, if the theater's budget remains at the present level, his successor will either be forced to lay off 30 percent of the theater's 50 employees, which would render the theater "unfunctional," or will not be able to bring out any new production this year. According to the CTK report, "Peter Kolar voiced the assumption that the most acceptable solution for Minister Hudec would be if Thalia and ethnic minorities' culture existed on paper only—for foreign countries."

Bratislava SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA in Slovak on 29 February on page 2 carries a 700-word article by "mp" entitled "The Truth About Thalia and Its Former Director," which rejects attempts to "politicize" the dismissal of the Thalia director.

The government daily admits that the Thalia Theater has been struggling with financial problems in recent years, but it attributes these problems to the director's "mismanagement." It points out that in 1994 Thalia received a state subsidy of 6,000,011 Slovak korunas (Sk) and in 1995 a subsidy of Sk7,411,000, which was Sk2,584,000 more than the comparable theater in Spiska Nova Ves. Instead of attending to an "economical and wise management" of the allocated funds, the SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA article alleges, the Thalia director relied on the Ministry of Culture bailing him out. The article continues: "When this did not happen, Mr. Kolar sounded the alarm. He wrote a letter to Hungarian President Arpad Goncz, which was full of untruths, lies, and self-pity and which culminated in the open expression of fears that 'the Hungarian community in Slovakia will be deprived of yet another very important institution.' The president reacted generously—he helped. Apparently, there was no one to tell him that, by doing so, he helped Mr. Kolar politicize the whole problem."

In conclusion, the SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA article says: "Someone has not come to terms with the management of an organization and has resorted to politicking to conceal his incompetence. Let the public itself assess who it was. The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic dealt with the situation in accordance with the law, which applies to everyone equally, at least in Slovakia. To Slovak as well as to Hungarian theaters, to Slovak as well as Hungarian directors."

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Hungary: Bildt, Kovacs Discuss Aid to Refugees

LD0303215396 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2121 GMT 3 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Budapest, March 3 (TANJUG)—Hungarian Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs and high representative of the international community for civilian affairs in Bosnia-Herzegovina Carl Bildt said late Sunday [3 March] the international community must help in the creation of material, legal, political, and psychological conditions for the return of exilees to their homes.

Bildt, who arrived in Budapest for a brief visit, and Kovacs told a press conference that their talks had primarily covered problems of refugees in former Yugoslavia. They stressed it was necessary for the about 250,000 people banished from Serb Krajina to return to their homes.

Kovacs asked the Swedish diplomat to back the efforts by Hungarian firms to join in the reconstruction of the war-devastated areas. This is the only way to make up for at least part of the 2.5 billion dollars' worth of damages which Hungary suffered as a result of the international sanctions against the Yugoslav Federation of Serbia and Montenegro, said Kovacs.

Hungary: Defense Minister Optimistic About Smaller Army

LD0403113596 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1000 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense Minister Gyoergy Keleti has spoken optimistically of army developments, the creation of a smaller and more modern military force. At the Defense Ministry leadership meeting, the minister said the transformation will mean significant staff reductions, which will affect professional soldiers and conscripts as well as civil servants. The introduction of nine-month national service, instead of the current 12 months, is being delayed. Gyoergy Keleti said the delay is caused by the fact that the number of professional soldiers is growing slowly.

Hungary: New Finance Minister Assesses Tasks, Plans

AU0303212696 Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 1 Mar 96 pp 1, 12

[Interview with Finance Minister Peter Medgyessi by Kalalin Bossanyi on 29 February in Budapest: "I Assign a Major Role to Dialogue"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Bossanyi] A year ago, following Laszlo Bekesi's resignation, the prime minister offered you the finance ministerial position but you did not then accept it. Now you have. Why?

[Medgyessy] At the time the Horn government was formed, I was asked for the industry ministerial position but the executive committee of the Hungarian Socialist Party [MSZP] did not support this nomination. With Bekesi's resignation, I was worried that I would not have enough political backing because—then—the Alliance of Free Democrats' [SZDSZ] support was not unequivocal, either. However, this time, leading organizations of both parties have firmly expressed their support for me and the economic policy I can carry out.

[Bossanyi] This "delay" can also be seen in such a way that, at that time, the country was in a very difficult financial situation. With the tough measures, Bokros [resigned finance minister] bore the brunt of it and you can now follow a better made path.

[Medgyessy] The current situation is indeed better because the "fire extinguishing" has already been done. The country's international image is much better now. I have experienced that the Hungarian changes are seen as models abroad because it is very rare to be able to improve the balance in a country while maintaining growth. Lajos Bokros and the chairman of the central bank, with whom he worked closely together, deserve much credit for this, and so does the government which undertook the unpopular but necessary measures. However, stabilization has not yet been ended, the remaining tasks are not at all smaller than those of a year ago. To achieve lasting improvement, we must produce a bigger growth—in my view, 3 percent this year and 4 to 5 percent in the coming years. This growth has two major pillars, namely the reduction of taxes and rates and of income centralization, and the limitation of redistribution, together with the immediate launching of the reform of state administration.

[Bossanyi] Can the government's promise that the overall concept of the reform of state administration will be accepted by the end of March be adhered to?

[Medgyessy] If we do not start the gradual change, for example, of the health and pension systems from the beginning of 1997 then it will simply be impossible to create a budget. In addition to the constraints, the reforms can also be helped by the fact that it is somewhat easier to take these difficult measures in a growing economy than during recession or when the GDP is decreasing. At the same time, it has to be clearly seen that the reform of the state administration takes a long time, sometime as long as a generation.

We can only achieve results if we also acquire the support of science and the profession, and we can

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also make the interest representation groups to accept the need for the reforms. I assign a major role to coordination and dialogue, to convincing people. At the same time, I will do all I can to ensure that the bulk of the burden should not be carried by people living on wages and salaries. The principle of needs and the assertion of social solidarity, along with a more just general sharing of the burden than today, have a key role in my economic philosophy.

[Bossanyi] Does this mean that you will be softer and more flexible in these difficult battles than your predecessor was?

[Medgyessy] Not softer but perhaps more tactical. I have a willingness for compromise, I always also try to imagine myself in the place of the negotiating partner. Rather than to defeat, I want to convince the other. Naturally, even in interest coordination, there is a point when, after broad consultations, it is not possible to delay matters any longer and a decision has to be made. I do not think that I will become weak in this respect, either.

The State's Role

[Bossanyi] During your committee hearings, you emphasized that you would support workplace creation, enterprise stimulation, and investments, but only with market measures, rather than with state intervention. What does this mean?

[Medgyessy] We must basically strive to reduce inflation and the interest rate level, and to allow the profitable companies, which are able to export, to develop. I am not thinking of special favors, except for the development of an institutional system of export incentives and, granting investment support for a narrow group. I believe that we must not watch idly the country's further splitting into two in a geographical and social sense. Therefore, from the state's scarce resources, it will be possible and necessary to support the declining areas with better coordination than before, in the framework of some well-designed programs.

[Bossanyi] Does this assume a target-oriented state?

[Medgyessy] All this would assume a smaller but stronger state. The state has to rearrange its former roles. Wherever the state is present, it has to remain very strong: It has to guarantee the citizens' legal and property security and assert the principle of social solidarity. [passage omitted]

[Bossanyi] The willingness for dialogue and thinking together are recurring ideas in this interview. Your predecessors had many problems with the Finance Ministry's legal standing and to what extent it can fill the role of a top ministry. What are your views on this?

[Medgyessy] I imagine a model which has an economic strategy and finance ministry, and a budget office or ministry. This cannot be fitted into the current Constitution. However, the status I have requested could, according to my hopes, bridge the problem for the economic cabinet. Therefore, I am not worried about the debate on "how many centers does the economic government have" flaring up again. The prime minister has taken a clear stance on this issue and this reassures me.

[Bossanyi] The government—and you, too, at your committee hearings—often refer to the improvement of macroeconomic indicators. They do indeed indicate a favorable shift from the nadir but the citizens are mainly interested in when they will be able to perceive the improvement in their own living standards.

[Medgyessy] If we consistently follow the path of stabilization and reforms, then I hope that the real wages will not decrease next year and inflation can be reduced to 15 percent. However, I would not like to make high-sounding promises because a finance minister is always rated by his work. So you can ask me in a year what I have achieved and in what I have failed. [passage omitted]

Hungary: Coalition Party Unhappy With Financial Moves

LD0203223896 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 2100 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Alliance of Free Democrats [SZDSZ—junior coalition party] Deputies Group is of the view that initiatives made so far to implement the reform of public finances have failed. On the closing day of its two-day meeting in Dunavarsany [near Budapest], the SZDSZ Deputy Group said that for the success of the implementation it was not enough to cite financial interests. Concerned groups in society and professional organizations should be made interested in the changes.

The SZDSZ Deputy Group dealt with the proposed amendment of the agent law [that is the law on vetting holders of certain important posts] yesterday [1 March]. They would like to ask the Constitutional Court, together with the Hungarian Socialist Party [HSP], to examine the constitutionality of the bill since it is also in the interest of the HSP that parliament adopts a law which complies with the Constitution.

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Hungary: Outgoing MDF Chairman Admits Failures

LD0203123396 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1200 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a self-critical speech today, Lajos Fur, the outgoing chairman of the Hungarian Democratic Forum [MDF], explained the early date of the party's national conference by saying that he has been was unable to establish party unity, which could have been expected from the party chairman.

Assessing the party's situation, Lajos Fur also expressed his regret over the failure to establish opposition cooperation which could guarantee a successful parliamentary performance against the present government coalition.

He believes the most important task of the conference is to prepare the MDF's political program.

The MDF's national conference is to decide this afternoon on whether to elect Sandor Lezsak or Ivan Szabo as the new party chairman.

Hungary: MDF Delegates Elect Lezsak as Chairman

LD0203180696 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1700 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sandor Lezsak is the new chairman of the Hungarian Democratic Forum [MDF—largest opposition party]. The new chairman's mandate is for two years and will expire 60 days after the second round of the 1998 parliamentary elections. [passage omitted]

The MDF was established in a tent in Lezsak's garden in Lakitelek [southeast Hungary] in 1988. [passage omitted]

Zoltan Hortobagyi reports on the MDF's 10th National Conference.

[Hortobagyi] Good evening. Delegates elected Sandor Lezsak, founder of the MDF [and deputy chairman], fourth MDF chairman with 400 votes for and 269 against. The decision was announced a couple of minutes ago after the closed door session. [passage omitted]

Gyoergy Gemesi [deputy chairman] was the first to congratulate Lezsak, who confirmed he wanted Gemesi to become executive deputy chairman. [passage omitted]

In a campaign speech before the vote, Lezsak said it was important to establish solidarity within the opposition so that they attack the government not each other. The MDF is interested in cooperating with a strong Christian Democratic People's Party and a reliable Federation of Young Democrats-Hungarian Civic Party. It also wants to be open towards the Independent Smallholders' Party since, in a number of local governments, it has been proved that cooperation is possible, said Lezsak. The party needs rejuvenation, new and young faces, he added.

Quoting Jozsef Antall [late prime minister and party chairman], he said trust was the most important. This is remarkable since Sandor Lezsak had been attacked for failing to mention the late prime minister in an earlier speech in Goedoelloe.

Hungary: MDF Members Protest Lezsak's Election

LD0303140596 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1200 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the example of Gabriella Farkas, Imre Ligeti, and Lajos Zseboek, more presidium members of the Hungarian Democratic Forum [MDF—largest opposition party] announced today that they withdrew their nomination for reelection. This means that Imre Konya, Erzsebet Pusztai, Attila Zsigmond, Ferenc Kulin, and Fabian Jozsa do not want to take part in the new MDF presidium to be led by Sandor Lezsak.

Imre Konya raised objections against the fact that no political debate was held before yesterday's election. He called it unacceptable that Gyoergy Szabad, former speaker of parliament, was silenced when he wanted to set out a proposal.

Deputy Gyoergy Rasko read a statement at the MDF national conference signed by nearly 200 members in which they distance themselves from the [national-conservative] political direction represented by Sandor Lezsak.

In reply to a question, Gyoergy Rasko did not confirm if a split in MDF was imminent. However, at least half of the MDF parliamentary deputies are among the signatories.

Hungary: MDF Parliamentary Group Leader Resigns

LD0303210496 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1900 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ivan Szabo, a candidate for the post of chairman in the Hungarian Democratic Forum [MDF], resigned from his post as the party's parliamentary group chairman in order to give an opportunity for the new MDF leaders to fill the post. This was stated by MDF deputy Gyoergy Rasko after the end of separate talks held by parliamentary deputies supporting Ivan Szabo.

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For the time being, Szabo and his supporters will not leave the parliamentary group, because they would like to hold talks with Sandor Lezsak, the newly elected party chairman. The parliamentary group would like to receive guarantees that their values are still owned by the MDF.

Hungary: MDF Chairman Interviewed on Promises

LD0303200196 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1700 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the end of the national congress of the Hungarian Democratic Forum [MDF], our colleague asked for an interview from Sandor Lezsak, the new chairman of the MDF.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] In your closing address, you mentioned that in future you would like to build and see a Hungary in which people can become richer but not at the expense of others, and where stable taxation is guaranteed for the employers. How do you imagine this to happen?

[Lezsak] And let me add that the employees should also be given legal security. The basic elements of this economic policy, with their positive effects, were present under the coalition government led by us from 1990 to 1994. We also had failures from which we had to learn and which will keep us under control.

Naturally, it is very difficult to formulate an economic program in the middle of the present government's term, against its policy, because there is a need for an exact knowledge of the country's economic situation and because every day brings new challenges.

We hope that there will be no further Medgyessy programs [Peter Medgyessy is the new finance minister] which would ruin the lives of Hungarian families, retired people, and young people who just founded a family.

When the country prepares for the next elections in 1998, we will have to prepare a program, a study on the implementation of this program, an action program, which will serve not only the cooperation of the opposition parties, but the interests of the country, the interests of ordinary people who live on farms, in villages, in small towns, and in Budapest's districts and large cities. This program—the fact that it can give answers to every strata of society—will make the Hungarian Democratic Forum a people's party. [end recording]

Hungary: Socialist Party Welcomes MDF Chairman

LD0203195696 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1900 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sandor Csintalan, executive deputy chairman of the Hungarian Socialist Party [senior government party], hopes that with the election of Sandor Lezsak as chairman of the Hungarian Democratic Forum [MDF] relations between the opposition and the government will be correct and fair. Sandor Csintalan stressed that the election of the [MDF] leadership and the party line are exclusively party matters. It is essential for the parliamentary parties to have a stable structure and the success of the change of regime is in their joint interest, said Csintalan.

The junior coalition party, the Alliance of Free Democrats, has not evaluated the change at the head of the largest opposition party since they do not want to interfere with the internal affairs of other parties.

Hungary: Opposition Comments on Lezsak's Election

LD0303151696 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1100 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] You can hear two opposition politicians on the election of Sandor Lezsak as chairman of the Hungarian Democratic Forum [MDF]. Edit Fekete reports:

[Begin recording] [Fekete] Bela Horvath, cabinet chief of the chairman of the Independent Smallholders' Party [FKGP]: On 2 March FKGP told MTI that it was capable of cooperating with the Sandor Lezsak-led MDF, but there were issues to be clarified. What did you have in mind?

[Horvath] FKGP has always supported the national wing of MDF, which is why we welcome the election of Sandor Lezsak. However, we think that there is a danger of a retaliation by the liberals of the party since the new presidium is still divided. Therefore, it is questionable for us whether the new chairman can purge MDF, particularly its deputy group, to make MDF capable of becoming a coalition-forming party.

We are supporting the idea of establishing a national-conservative union [oesszefogas] in which compromised liberal opposition politicians have no place. [passage omitted]

We are pleased that the situation of Gyoergy Giczy and Tibor Fuezessy has strengthened within the Christian Democratic People's Party [KDNP]. We have had a close relationship with them. The possibility of a

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national-conservative coalition seems to be emerging. [passage omitted]

[Fekete] Gyoergy Giczy, KDNP chairman. How did you receive the news on Sandor Lezsak's election?

[Giczy] I received it with great pleasure. [passage omitted] Perhaps with his [Lezsak's] help, a national union with a wide social base can be created that will be capable of replacing the present government coalition.

[Fekete] Who would be involved in this national union?

[Giczy] I am thinking of a union with as wide an opposition base as possible, one which does not want to exclude any political force from the beginning. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Hungary: Free Democrats Reelect Leaders

LD2902232496 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 2100 GMT 29 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Today the SZDSZ [Alliance of Free Democrats] parliamentary deputies held their regular annual meeting in Dunavarsany. Judit Laszlo reports.

[Laszlo] As it was expected, the SZDSZ deputies' group reelected Ivan Petoe leader. The party chairman had no rival. However, one deputy voted against him.

Gyula Gaal and Peter Hack were confirmed as deputy leaders of the parliamentary group. [passage omitted]

Hungary: Christian Democrats Support Leadership

LD0303101096 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 0600 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The national executive of the Christian Democratic People's party has turned down a proposal calling for the abolition of the post of executive chairman presently held by Tibor Puezessyt. A brief statement issued about yesterday's [2 March] meeting reports that this decision confirms their confidence not only in the executive chairman, but also in Chairman Gyoergy Giczy.

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B-H: President Zubak Interviewed on Federation, Mostar

LD0303160396 Sarajevo Televizija Bosne i Hercegovine in Serbo-Croatian 2145 GMT 2 Mar 96

[Studio interview with Kresimir Zubak, president of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation, by Arijana Saracevic; date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Saracevic] Good evening, dear viewers. Our guest at Bosnia-Herzegovina Television this evening is Kresimir Zubak, president of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation. Good evening.

[Zubak] Good evening.

[Saracevic] Mr. Zubak, let me ask you: The Federation's Constitution was passed two years ago. Can you comment on its implementation?

[Zubak] [Passage omitted] Other people probably expected greater achievements. I did too, but objectively I do not think we could have achieved more. There is not a single issue, a single sphere of life in which we, representatives of both nations, are not encountering huge problems. The representatives of both nations—who hold talks and negotiations and eventually sign various agreements in order to solve numerous outstanding issues that must be solved—are extremely exhausted. This is a huge physical, psychological, and mental effort. We are under constant psychological and political pressure. This is exceptionally complex work. When we take all this into consideration, I think we have made considerable progress, especially after the signing of the Dayton agreement, which removed some of the dilemmas and doubts I mentioned—primarily the one concerning the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina. [passage omitted]

[Saracevic] So what are the Federation's chances?

[Zubak] If the Federation is indeed the political concept of both nations—both the Bosniak Muslims and the Croats—its chances are very good, I believe. I personally think—and there are many examples in the world to substantiate this—that if we play an honest game, there is enough room for complete affirmation of both nations in the social, economic, political, and cultural spheres; enough room for free life and free development. This could be a prosperous community, like similar communities in the world, such as Switzerland and Belgium for example. [passage omitted]

[Saracevic] Mr. Zubak, there have been plenty of examples when we expected you—as president of the Federation—to fight for the Federation, but you sided with the Croat people.

[Zubak] You are right, and I do not hide that. I speak about it openly, and that is the best thing to do. I am glad that everyone openly asks me about it.

I am president of the Federation, and I must and will work on the project of the Federation, but I am doing that job on behalf of the Croat people. When all the institutions of the Federation's authorities are set up from top to bottom; when all the dilemmas, doubts, questions, and problems we are facing now, and which in a certain way divide us; and when all these difficulties are overcome; I believe that the new president of the Federation, from the ranks of either the Croat or the Bosniak Muslim peoples, will be the true president of the Federation. The situation is still such that we—the president and vice president of the Federation—represent our respective nations.

[Saracevic] Does that mean that relations between Sarajevo and Zagreb will not improve until you stop obeying the orders from Zagreb?

[Zubak] People often raise objections to me that we obey orders from Zagreb. To a large extent that is true. We do not hide it. The Croats are numerically the weakest people in Bosnia-Herzegovina. They suffered aggression in the same way as the Bosniak Muslim people. [passage omitted]

I said on several occasions that we Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina can be an independent political player only when conditions are created for our full equality.

All complex state communities that have disintegrated—such as the former SFRY [Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia], the Soviet Union, and Czechoslovakia—were (?arenas) in which the numerically stronger nation, which aspired toward hegemony and dominance, fought with the numerically weaker nation, which struggled for equality. This is why these states could not survive.

We are the numerically weaker nation, and we are fighting for equality in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Equality has not yet been achieved. Until it is achieved, we need strong support from Zagreb, as you say, from Croatia. If we did not have that support, we would not be an equal partner in the true sense of the word. When our equality is fully achieved in practice, I believe there will be no need for political or any other support from Zagreb. We will be able to decide about our future as an equal partner and reach agreements with our political partners and representatives of other nations living in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[Saracevic] You are a lawyer by profession. As a politician, do you have an intuition that this could happen soon?

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[Zubak] I am not a politician by vocation. I said it several times—it was due to the circumstances. It is very difficult to observe these turbulent times. It does not just depend on our will. For instance, the situation in and the status of Bosnia-Herzegovina does not just depend on what attitude the Croats will adopt toward Bosnia-Herzegovina. It also depends on the attitude adopted by the Bosniak Muslim and Serb political leaderships, the neighboring countries, and finally the whole world toward this difficult question. It is very difficult to predict how things will develop in the future, but I am such a person by nature that I would not have taken on this job had I not believed we had a chance of executing a good project and creating the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation as I see it.

[Saracevic] Does it mean that work has started, at least on paper, on reshaping the so-called Herceg-Bosna into the federation?

[Zubak] The issue of Herceg-Bosna is unavoidable. It has cropped up in every contact I have had with journalists. I will give you an answer. Everyone wants to know when exactly Herceg-Bosna will be reshaped, when it will stop functioning. No one has ever asked me what were the reasons behind [creating] Herceg-Bosna—political or any other reasons and motives that made the Croats organize themselves, first as a community and later as the Republic of Herceg-Bosna. I will not talk about that. By accepting the project of the federation, we also accepted that the state attributes of Herceg-Bosna should be transferred to the federation and Herceg-Bosna will not have state attributes.

[Saracevic] Let us go back to other topical issues—Mostar and problems concerning the Rome agreement.

[Zubak] You are thinking of incidents. You see, the case of Mostar must be thoroughly analyzed, from all aspects. The public knows it was the scene of the fiercest clashes. I do not know whether anyone has been comparing the number of victims on either side. [passage omitted]

I think that we reached a political solution in Rome—a compromise solution acceptable for both people. A great deal of patience and wisdom is now needed to proceed with these political and other processes in Mostar's territory in order to overcome the present situation and overcome lack of trust that still exists.

If new faces emerge from the upcoming elections the process will proceed more quickly. I do not know who the candidates will be on either side, but it is possible that this can contribute to the speedier solution of numerous problems that are still present in Mostar, though—as you can see—the situation has been much better after the agreements reached in Rome.

[Saracevic] Are there any cases violating the Dayton and Rome agreements? For instance, a foundation stone was laid for a cathedral outside the retired people's club. Major construction plans are under way outside the Hit department store. A foundation stone was laid for a Croat national theater outside EU headquarters. Not only that the Dayton agreement is violated, but these sites are also property of the Islamic community, i.e., property of [word indistinct].

[Zubak] You are wrong. These projects started before the Dayton agreement. All these projects started before the agreement in Rome [place name as heard]. [passage omitted]

[Saracevic] How sincere are both partners in making Mostar a unified town?

[Zubak] You see, Mostar has been the center of media attention unnecessarily. There are reports that the project of the federation depends on Mostar. I do not think so. But our attitude to the project of the federation is important in general. On behalf of the Croat people, I can say with authority that it is a political project that has the backing of our official policy, both in Bosnia-Herzegovina and—as you say—in Zagreb. This is compatible with the political platform we defined before the aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina. [passage omitted]

However, we are concerned about the political concept [of Bosnia-Herzegovina] advocated by the Muslim Bosniak leadership. Is the federation truly their concept? [passage omitted]

[Saracevic] You remember the people who attacked Koschnick [European administrator of Mostar]. The same people wore Hitler masks [at a masked ball in Mostar]. Have you done anything to punish them?

[Zubak] No, nothing has been done. How can you be sure that they were the same people? Have you got any concrete evidence? I do not think they were the same people.

That is one thing, and also it always happens that REUTER is the first to give any information about incidents, not only in Mostar but about all incidents between Croats and Bosniak Muslims. This does not happen by accident. There are countries in the world and in Europe who do not hold the federation dear, and who would like to destroy it. They watch for any such incident. The incident with the mask falls into the same category.

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Do people not know that a masked ball was held in Mostar on that day? The carnival is a process that lasts several days, it does not take place just one specific day. No one described it [the wearing of Hitler's mask] in that way, they only showed the photograph of Hitler in Mostar. Even if it had been so, we cannot build the theory on the basis that Hitler is the symbol of the Croats of Mostar. Even if it had been so, do we have to identify that one man [who wore the mask] with all the Croats who live in Mostar? I think there are attempts to construe it in this way. There is no doubt that there are people who (?want) to do this. I can cite numerous examples of people like that on the other side, too. But where would we end up if we accused each other all the time? [passage omitted]

[Saracevic] Mr. Zubak, you are the president of the federation. We spoke about the freedom of movement in Mostar. Is there any freedom of movement?

[Zubak] There is no complete freedom [of movement] anywhere—unfortunately neither in Mostar nor in many other places. Among other things, in Rome we tried to agree on ensuring the complete freedom of movement, but it is not working. Believe me, freedom of movement is just as restricted in the areas controlled by the Bosnia-Herzegovina army as it is in the areas controlled by the Croat Defense Council [HVO]

[Saracevic] Do you have any examples?

[Zubak] Yes, these things are done in a very precise way. You can come to Sarajevo quite easily—by cars with registration plates from Mostar, but with Herceg-Bosna symbols. To other areas, Livno, etc., people are driving such cars without any problems. However, there are areas where you cannot do that. These registration plates are not valid in Brcko, Usora, and some other places. [passage omitted] and say there were more incidents on the Muslim Bosiak side than in the territory under HVO control. It is enough that one person cannot reach his destination, wherever this may be, and this means there is no freedom of movement. And there is no freedom of movement, I can tell you that there is not.

[Saracevic] I have to get back to Mostar. Does Mostar have a future?

[Zubak] I am sure it has. But let me stress once again, Mostar cannot be viewed as an isolated case. All these events in Mostar have an impact on other areas and vice versa. The events in other areas have an impact on Mostar. Our overall attitude to the federal project is important. And if we deal with the project sincerely, jointly, without any calculations, reservations or hidden goals, etc., Mostar will solve its own problem.

[Saracevic] In your opinion, what will Mostar be like in the future? Will it be a unified town?

[Zubak] By definition and according to the Constitution, it is a unified town. Just like Sarajevo. It is an urban community that is an entity in both a legal and administrative sense, with a number of municipalities, like Sarajevo.

[Saracevic] Mr. Zubak, a pilot project for the return of people to Stolac, Bugojno, Jajce, and so on has been made. Shall we talk about Stolac first? When will 200 Bosniak families return to Stolac?

[Zubak] Mr. Ejup Ganic and I visited the area. Mr. [name indistinct] from the UNHCR went with us. We signed an agreement: we only attended the signing, and local representatives of the two nations—and Mr. [name indistinct] as a guarantor—signed an agreement to start the reconstruction, the repair of houses in order to create conditions for the return of Bosniak Muslims.

As I was informed, the houses [to be repaired] were selected by representatives of the Bosniak Muslim nation from Stolac, so the two sides agree fully, but money is the problem. Some time has passed, the international community made firm promises, the UNHCR made specific promises, but we have seen no money. This does not depend on representatives of either nation, but on the speed of reconstruction and on creating conditions for the return of those people.

[Saracevic] Apart from the signing of the famous agreement on the return of Bosniaks, that project has not moved from status quo yet?

[Zubak] No, it has not started yet.

[Saracevic] The latest report we heard was that unidentified groups blew up 200 houses in Stolac, houses to which Bosniaks should return.

[Zubak] Where did you get this report? Before or after the signing of the agreement?

[Saracevic] After the signing.

[Zubak] I hear about it for the first time now. [passage omitted]

[Saracevic] Do you know who those unidentified groups were?

[Zubak] Very probably, the same, similar groups to those who burned down Croat houses in Bugojno, they certainly have the same character. I do not defend them or [words indistinct]. I think these actions are impermissible, but they happen on both sides. [passage omitted]

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[Saracevic] Lists are being drawn up of the people who can and those who cannot return to their homes. Jajce is an example of such a practice.

[Zubak] I have to admit that this is the first time I have heard this. I often find myself in the situation that my people inform me in—so to say—in an unobjective way. I do not want to go into discussions of who is right and who is wrong. I am all in favor of representatives of the international community going to an area to establish the facts and say what is true and what is not.

I hear this for the first time, that any lists are being drawn up of those fit or unfit to return. If that is true, I am against it, but I have not heard anything about it so far. It is possible that this is true, I do not want to say that it is not, but I know nothing about it.

[Saracevic] You said that representatives of the HDZ [Croat Democratic Union] and the SDA [Party of Democratic Action] had a meeting with you yesterday to talk about Bugojno.

[Zubak] [words indistinct] central Bosnian canton and Bugojno in connection with that.

[Saracevic] Shall we talk about the cantons now? It was agreed in Rome that there should be 10 cantons.

[Zubak] No, it was not agreed that there would be 10 cantons. All other areas were agreed in Rome, but it was left up to Croat representatives to decide within a given deadline how to organize the area in west Bosnia-Herzegovina. After that we decided to set up two cantons there. The Rome agreement did not define 10 cantons, but set out the principles.

A team has been formed. The Ministry of Justice needs to prepare that law [the law on federal units]. Immediately upon my return [presumably from Rome] I sent a letter to the prime minister and the justice minister (?containing) the Rome documents and a letter telling them they had to prepare the law as a matter of urgency. I suggested expert teams should be formed because the borders must be drawn by experts [words indistinct], land registries must be consulted, and so on. That team has been formed with a proportionate number of experts from the Croat and Bosniak Muslim nations. We have been informed that they are finishing off their work. It is possible that the 10 March deadline for the law on federal units will be observed, if a constituent assembly session is convened by then.

[Saracevic] There have been a lot of polemics over Podrinje [Drina valley area of northeastern Bosnia]. How do you view this matter from here?

[Zubak] Are you thinking about what happened at Dayton in connection with Podrinje? I would not like to comment on this. I said we could talk about everything openly, but right now I would not like to comment on this question because this could invite all kinds of interpretations, and perhaps this might provoke tension, so I would not like to comment on this.

[Saracevic] Do you think there are people who are waiting to hear your comments?

[Zubak] Well, as I said. I personally was against changing the contact group's plan. I was [word indistinct]. And I was also in favor of certain adjustments because some things changed in the wake of the fighting, but I advocated the contact group's plan, and I would not like to make any other comment on this now.

[Saracevic] Thank you. Then let us turn to Bugojno. The transitional municipal authorities have still not been established there.

[Zubak] [Words indistinct] soon. The decision here was clear. The decision of the arbiter was clear, too. I do not know why there are problems here. According to the arbiter's decision, the mayor, or rather head of municipality, should be elected from among the Croat people. At present, after the latest elections in Bugojno, the HDZ has most deputies in the municipal assembly. So the HDZ has the right, both on the basis of the political agreement that we reached and in terms of the decisions passed by the arbiter, to put forward candidates for mayor. This should be implemented.

[Saracevic] The question of Neum and the port of Ploce—these are certainly issues of fundamental importance for the functioning of the federation. In Split you discussed customs and the abolition of visas between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. These two issues—the question of Neum and the port Ploce—have been postponed until your next meeting.

[Zubak] I personally was not involved in (?the decisive part of) the talks in Split. My personal achievement has been to achieve progress in our mutual relations—the relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina as a whole and between the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation and the Republic of Croatia. I did not expect us to draw up an agreement on the issue of Ploce and Neum. According to reports I have received, these talks were very correct and were held in a very positive atmosphere. Groups were formed and I expect us to soon have a new meeting at the same level and find a solution both for Neum and for Ploce.

[Saracevic] Mr. Zubak, what is clear...

[Zubak, interrupting] I would not like to go into concrete details here...

[Saracevic, interrupting] But what is clear...

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[Zubak, interrupting] I would not like to prejudge the situation. Let those people who are involved in these working groups propose options on how to resolve this issue.

[Saracevic] Fine. But so far the Bosniaks have not been able to get close to Neum, which in practice is integrated into Croatia. When will Bosniaks be able to go to Neum? Will they be able to visit their homes? We know there are a large number of Bosniaks...

[Zubak, interrupting] Neum has not been integrated in Croatia. People from Neum are complaining to us about Croat customs officials and police. They would prefer it if there were no border. There are often long delays, controls, etc., which should not be the practice between two neighboring and friendly countries.

As for the return of Bosniak Muslims to Neum, I do not know how many people were living in Neum before the war, before our clashes. But they will return. I am sure they will return, just like they will to all other places.

[Saracevic] What will happen to the property of a large number of Bosniaks who had their houses there?

[Zubak] Their property is sacrosanct—if it is well and truly private ownership. This is stated in all the documents we prepared on Bosnia-Herzegovina and in all the plans, including the Dayton agreement. This is the biggest hope for the return [of refugees]—this guarantee [words indistinct]—because no one can take away the ownership rights, that is, the rights of Bosniak Muslims in Podrinje or the rights of Croats in Posavina. In my opinion, this has always been the best motive for the return to one's own homes, the fact that they are privately owned. [passage omitted]

[Saracevic] The commander of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army General Staff, General Rasim Delic, and the commander of the Croat Defense Council [HVO] General Staff, Zivko Budimir, are in the United States at the moment. Does this mean that work on the consolidation of Federation Joint Armed Forces has started?

[Zubak] There are still a number of issues to be resolved—which boil down to two main ones—before we can pass a law on Defense of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. I hope we shall manage to resolve these problems and that at the next session of the Constituent Assembly we shall have a law on defense—which is a legal prerequisite for establishing the Federation Joint Armed Forces, although we have already started the process to an extent.

The visit to the United States and also the attendance of the Joint Bosnia-Herzegovina and HVO Delegation at the Vienna talks are aimed at consolidating our ties in this field.

[Saracevic] Is there anything that I have not asked you?

[Zubak] There are quite a few issues that have remained open.

[Saracevic] For instance?

[Zubak] I always urge going back to the primary issue, which is the political concept that the two nations are pursuing. Is it really this federation project? In this respect we have to be totally clear, to say publicly and openly: Yes, this is our project. Let us tell each other what suits us and what does not. It is only then, once the situation has been clarified politically, that we can say: This is our future, this is our chance.

The project itself stands a good chance but we have not yet defined some things in our mutual relations. One of the issues is to tell the people publicly: Yes, this is the political concept that we have embraced, both for the present and for the future. There is no other way.

I have said what the political platform and position of we who represent the Croat people in Bosnia-Herzegovina are: The federation is our goal. I have said that at the Constituent Assembly in Novi Travnik, where I submitted an open and lengthy address. By its content, that speech was a program for the Croat people. I expected a reaction from deputies or any other representatives of the Muslim-Bosniak people but I was met with silence.

We have to begin a dialogue on these important issues, whether in public or behind closed doors. However, we must clarify these issues completely, from our history and for the sake of our future. There is enough scope for both. It is only important that we voice our position and say clearly: These are the fundamental issues on which we are in agreement. We have to give complete freedom to both nations to regulate their own life, cherish their own tradition, to look after their identity and spiritual sovereignty.

[Saracevic] We are bound to do this by the Dayton agreement?

[Zubak] Yes.

[Saracevic] I would like to ask you a question which I posed to Ejup Ganic, vice president of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the other day. You are currently being watched by Bosnia-Herzegovina refugees all over the world. What would you like to tell them? Would you like to invite them to come home as soon as possible, to guarantee their freedom?

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[Zubak] I am one of those people who has always urged that everyone return to their home. All these documents, particularly the Dayton one, proceed from that right—the right of all refugees to return to their homes, or alternatively to be given fair compensation.

Unfortunately, we have not yet created all conditions for their safe return. Not only for their safe return, we have not created even elementary conditions. We have not yet built houses to which these people can return. If they have had so much patience and willpower to wait until now, I would like to call on all refugees to have a little more patience for a while longer. We have been given firm guarantees by the international community and UNHCR [UN High Commissioner for Refugees] that they would create conditions for their return, working together with us. And then they should return to where they lived before without fail.

[Saracevic] Mr. Zubak, thank you for this interview.

B-H: Federation President To Represent 'Only' Croats

LD0203194696 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At today's roundtable organized by the Council of Bosniak Intellectuals, Kresimir Zubak, president of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, presented his views on Bosniak-Croat relations and the implementation of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Zubak said that his political goal was to establish the federation and to freely represent the Croats of Bosnia-Herzegovina. According to Zubak, Bosniaks and Croats entered the federation without politically redefining the interests and goals of both nations. He said that this was the source of all problems in the implementation of the federal project.

As far as the Croats of Bosnia-Herzegovina are concerned, he said that the federal project was in line with their political platform which had been presented even before the war. Zubak said that establishing the Croat community of Herzeg-Bosnia in the initial stage, and later the Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia, was a vital issue. No one from the Bosniak side paid attention to our basic decisions on setting up the community and the republic, he said. No one has respected and no one respects the fact that the Croats took part in the [independence] referendum in 1992 and voted for the independent Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, he said.

According to Zubak, the nub of the problem is that the Muslim-Bosniak political leadership has not accepted the federation as its model for a new coexistence and future but is using it as a transitional stage and as a means of realizing its own political goal—the rule of one nation masked as a civil and democratic society.

Asked why he spoke only in the name of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Croats and not on behalf of the Bosniaks, as he was their president also, Zubak said that he would speak only in the name of the Croats within the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina until all aspects of the federation were implemented, and as long as the Croat nation in Bosnia-Herzegovina did not enjoy equal rights regarding decisions on political issues in the entire territory of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

B-H: President Zubak Demands More Credit for HVO

LD0303000996 Sarajevo Televizija Bosne i Hercegovine in Serbo-Croatian 2100 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Bosnian Federation President Kresimir Zubak has sent an open letter to the Bosnia-Herzegovina Radio-TV that reads:

In your evening news bulletin, by which the newsroom marked last night, 1 March, the Bosnia-Herzegovina Independence Day, an item was prepared for the occasion on the course of the battle for Bosnia-Herzegovina's freedom and independence.

Although this item, both on account of the significance of the date and the nature of the medium, should have been an integral part of the spirit of unity or—as it is now often called—multiethnicity, it is my opinion that its essence and message were inadmissible and one-sided.

The only credit for the safeguarding of Bosnia-Herzegovina independence is, according to this item, due to the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army. The HVO [Croatian Defense Council] has not been mentioned even once. And it is through the HVO that the Croat people in Bosnia-Herzegovina have been actively engaged in the Bosnia-Herzegovina defense against aggression.

It is a well-known fact that as far back as September 1991, the Croatian nation in Bosnia-Herzegovina suffered the first sacrifices in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and was the first one to warn against the former Yugoslav People's Army preparations in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Unarmed, it has stopped the Yugo armada's tanks near Mostar with its bare breast.

The Croatian nation in Posavina in central Bosnia and partly in Sarajevo—together with the Muslim people—through the HVO has organized and initiated and, until the end of hostilities, carried out Bosnia-Herzegovina's defense and liberation.

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The HVO was also the organizer of the defense and liberation of Mostar and the whole Neretva valley. It was the HVO units who kept the only link between Bosnia-Herzegovina and the free world.

The contribution of the HVO and the Croatian Army in the final battles for liberation of northwest Bosnia and Bosnian Krajina is also well known. It was also publicly acknowledged in speeches by Bosnia-Herzegovina officials and international players.

The HVO was a legal defense force even before the Washington and Dayton Agreements and still is. Those are events from the recent past, which is in fact still the present, and it is difficult to believe that it could be simple ignorance.

On the other hand, if it was done intentionally then it represents another attack on the political concepts on which the Washington and Dayton Agreements are founded, on the concept of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation consisting of two equal and constituent nations.

If evident facts on the contributions of the Croats in the defense of Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as the contribution of Croats in the success of the referendum, whose day of the successful holding was taken as the Bosnia-Herzegovina Independence day, in other words, glorification of only one of the subjects in the historical process are ignored, we will consider it as a serious professional omission with political consequences on the relations of two nations and two components of the Bosnia-Herzegovina defense.

B-H: Ganic, U.S. Congressman Discuss Reconstruction Aid

LD0203124596 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1100 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] After a meeting with Ejup Ganic, a member of the Bosnia-Herzegovina presidency and vice president of the federation, U.S. Congressman Sonny Callahan announced in Sarajevo today that the United States will try to contribute a further $250 million to the international community's fund for the reconstruction of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Congressman Callahan is leading a U.S. Congress delegation in Sarajevo, which is making an overview of urgent needs in the reconstruction of Bosnia-Herzegovina. His country, according to Callahan, has earmarked $350 million for the needs of reconstruction in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Ganic thanked the U.S. Congress for its generous support for the policies of the legal authorities of Bosnia-Herzegovina. He described this beginning of intensive U.S. participation in the process of the reconstruction of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a big step forward.

B-H: Bosnia, World Bank Sign Agreement Worth $160 Million

LD0203104396 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1000 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Bosnian Finance Minister Mirsad Kikanovic has signed an agreement in Washington with the World Bank worth $160 million.

This has been announced by Bosnian Foreign Affairs Minister Jadranko Prlic. He said that it is especially important that the agreement was signed at a time when Bosnia-Herzegovina is not yet a member of the World Bank, and that negotiations are continuing on eight other agreements, the signing of which is expected in the first half of this year.

B-H: Ganic Addresses Citizens on Independence Day

AU0103173096 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 1 Mar 96

[Report by Senada Cumurovic on speech by Ejup Ganic, vice president of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation, in Sarajevo on 1 March]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] For the first time, 1 March, Bosnia-Herzegovina's independence day, was celebrated in peace. After the national anthem was played, B-H citizens at home and abroad were addressed by Ejup Ganic on behalf of the state. He recalled that this is not just peace, but rather a peace of which the ultimate goal is justice.

[Begin Ganic recording] We survived a horrible war, and we have remained on the path of democracy, equal rights for citizens, and civilizational principles of a normal society and community to which man, freedom, and supreme values reign. [end recording]

We are deeply grateful to those who helped us, but we will be developing our country to suit the Bosnians, Ganic said, stating the principles on which the Bosnia's independence should rely and be preserved.

[Begin Ganic recording] We will strengthen our defense through a wise choice of allies and friends, a strong system of interior security and that of people and private property, through spiritual recovery, a flexible economy and private entrepreneurship, a modern education system, through sports, so that everyone has an equal chance, and finally, by keeping alive the memory of those who died for a democratic and free Bosnia-Herzegovina. [end recording]

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According to Ganic, Bosnia is the country of Bosniaks, the fatherland of Croats, and the motherland of Serbs, Jews, and all other people living in it.

[Begin Ganic recording] We, who on 6 April 1992 called on people to defend the state, are morally obliged to resolve honestly and consistently the problems of soldiers, the disabled, and the families of killed soldiers. Confidence in this state is won by its attitude toward its wounded and disabled defenders, as well as toward the wives and children of the killed soldiers. [end recording]

May God save our Bosnia and all of you, Ganic said, concluding his address. [passage omitted]

B-H: Gen Delic Views U.S. Talks, Foreign Soldiers

LD0103233396 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 2100 GMT 1 Mar 96

[Passages within quotation marks recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] A six-member delegation from the Federation Army is on an official visit to the United States. The delegation is headed by Generals Rasim Delic and Zivko Budimir, commanders in chief of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army and the Croatian Defense Council [HVO]. They have had meetings with the most senior representatives from the U.S. State Department and Pentagon. The delegation has visited several important training bases for the U.S. Army. The visit will end today, after talks with three companies that are competing to win a contract for equipping the Federation Army. Envera Selimovic, who talked to Army Gen. Rasim Delic, first man of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, has more details.

[Selimovic] The delegation headed by Gen. Delic and Budimir has been received at the highest political and military levels. The United States has again shown interest in fulfilling the obligation it assumed earlier to arm and train the Federation's Army.

According to the first estimates, this program requires $800 million. It was announced earlier that the United States would provide equipment to the tune of $100 million. The remaining $700 million would be secured through donations. The first conference of donor countries will be held in around (?15) days in Ankara.

I stressed that we are fully complying with the obligations we assumed, Gen. Delic said for Bosnia-Herzegovina Radio. On the other hand, he said, there are many obligations that the Serb side has not complied with; on the contrary, they are directly threatening and harassing even IFOR [Implementation Force] soldiers. As for constant objections that the Bosnia-Herzegovina Government has not complied with the obligation to disband foreign soldiers, primarily from Iran, Delic had the following to say: I stressed here that we have complied with all our obligations, and the search for isolated cases—which should in a way reintroduce the principle of shared responsibility—is out of the question. The peace agreement cannot be implemented by putting burden on those who even during the war showed that they were in favor of democracy.

Delic had the following to say on the presence of foreign soldiers:

[Delic] "I think that we suggested this earlier, and I stressed the same thing now again: A competent team—which the United States could appoint—could [words indistinct], and such a presence does not have a military aspect to it. This should finally be taken off the agenda. I think that the best way to deal with this is for one to see it at close quarters in the field, rather than make statements about it and try to discredit at certain moments the leaders of Bosnia-Herzegovina or some institutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina."

[Selimovic] Asked about cooperation with Gen. Budimir, Delic said: We went to all the meetings here together. We want to create trust in the Federation's Army. I think that Gen. Budimir received a clear message that the United States has an interest in the creation of a Federation Army that will not only reflect political views, but will be a result of a genuine need to be capable of defending the Federation and State of Bosnia-Herzegovina from possible aggression.

[Delic] "Our interlocutors were very concrete in these talks, indicating what was unacceptable in the perception of the Federation Army and other relations within the Federation. I think it is very clear both to me and Gen. Budimir.

"It is clear—and I have asked for it—that the U.S. representatives will come directly there, to initiate and instigate—if I have to say—in a certain way to secure that certain legal solutions and decisions regarding the Federation Army are adopted without delay. Without this, there is no armament, no supplying equipment, or no formation of the Federation Army."

[Selimovic] Concerning the unwillingness of some countries to implement the decision on lifting the arms embargo, Gen. Delic says: During the war we showed that we are able to defend ourselves, even arm ourselves—partly from abroad, most of the arms we manufactured ourselves. We have also captured a lot from the opponent. Gen. Delic adds that the Dayton peace agreement envisages lifting the embargo, and this cannot be overlooked anymore.

[Delic] "That is why, even if there is pressure that the armament of the Federation Army not proceed

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according to plan or the Federation Army not be formed, I remind you that the United States took the obligation two years ago to arm the Army of Bosnia-Herzegovina to achieve some balance.

"I also wish to stress that we have made many friends during these four years. Now, when the embargo is officially lifted in the peace agreement, they can help much more, because they can do it publicly. If no [word indistinct] agreement is reached on armament [passage indistinct]."

B-H: Muslim Press Views Relations With U.S., Iran

LD0103210696 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2013 GMT 1 Mar 96

["Pool" item by Sreten Petrovic]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 1 (TANJUG)—Judging by the Bosnian Muslim press, Americans are preparing ground in Bosnia for as quick as possible removal from power of Muslim leader Alija Izetbegovic, because his government "has gone very far in the country's Iranization."

According to the Muslim press, many of the agreements signed with Tehran, some of which secretly, make Bosnia-Herzegovina dependent on the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The reason for raising the "taboo topic" has been the recent discovery of Iranian mercenaries at a secret camp for the training of terrorists near Fojnica, a small town near Sarajevo and surely within the sight of the Izetbegovic administration.

The to Izetbegovic close Sarajevo weekly [as received] LJILJAN said in its latest issue that Washington was using the discovery of the Iranian mercenaries to promote the more moderate former Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic.

"It is becoming clear even to laymen that nothing will be happening accidentally on the hot Bosnian stage," the weekly said.

LJILJAN said the recent arrest of Iranian mujahedin was one form of pressure on Izetbegovic and the demand for Sarajevo "to sever military cooperation with Muslim countries" a particularly hard one.

The pro-Silajdzic Sarajevo weekly SLOBODNA BOSNA said in the latest issue that Muslim authorities' reactions to the arrest of the Muslim terrorists in Fojnica were tragicomic.

"President Izetbegovic first told foreign journalists...that he only knew that Iranian citizens with diplomatic passports had been arrested, which is precisely what those who had organized the operation wanted to hear," SLOBODNA BOSNA said.

"Bosnia is slowly but surely tuning into an arena for America's reckoning with Iran...there is no need to elaborate on what such a game could turn into," the weekly said.

B-H: Tension 'Increasing' Over Checkpoint Stalemate

AU0403084296 Paris AFP in English 0012 GMT 4 Mar 96

[By Mark Rice-Oxley]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Doboj, Bosnia-Herzegovina, March 4 (AFP)—Peace enforcers in Bosnia are facing increasing tension along the zone of separation in the north of the country where police are denying civilians freedom of movement, implementation force (IFOR) officials said Sunday.

The situation is particularly tense in and around this north Bosnian town, where civilians want to return to their former homes or visit relatives, but have been prevented from doing so by police or by locals on the other side of the divide, IFOR spokesman Major Terje Myklevoll told AFP.

"The situation is tense here," Myklevoll said after a week during which hundreds of Moslems protested their inability to return to former homes in Serb-held territory.

"According to the Dayton peace accords these people have the right to go home," Myklevoll said. "IFOR is continuing to monitor the situation closely."

Under Bosnia's Dayton peace accords, all refugees and displaced persons are guaranteed the right to return to their homes of origin. For some this has already been possible, as towns are transferred in line with territory swaps provided for in the accords.

But for many others, those homes are still situated in territory controlled by the faction which drove them out in the first place, presenting a headache for enforcers of civilian aspects of the peace.

Moreover, the situation at checkpoints around this northern, Serb-controlled town has altered dramatically in recent weeks. Less than a month ago, the zone of separation was crowded with overjoyed civilians meeting relatives for the first time in years under the close watch of local police.

But for as yet unclear reasons, Serb police stopped crossovers late last month and increased the number of their own checkpoints, leaving hundreds of civilians

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desperate for elusive family reunions disappointed in no-man's-land.

"I just want to see my brother," said one woman too nervous to give her name. "I haven't seen him five years.

"I'm afraid to go across into Doboj even though I am a Serb," she added. "And they won't let my brother come here now."

Myklevoll said part of the problem lies in the inadequate presence of the International Police Task Force (IPTF), a United Nations body which has deployed only a few hundred of the 1,700 officers, who are desperately needed to oversee civilian aspects of peace implementation in Bosnia.

"We regret that there are only five UN police officers present here and this is not enough for them to fulfil their tasks," Myklevoll said, stressing that IFOR would only intervene in situations where physical violence was breaking out, or where IFOR's own operations were being compromised.

He said that because the IPTF had still not sent the 40 officers earmarked for the Doboj region, the Serbs had been able to swell the ranks of their police force and clamp down almost at will on the freedom of movement of civilians from Bosnian government territory.

But family reunions are not the only issue at stake in northern Bosnia, where a snaking zone of separation tracking the tortuous former frontline serves to compound problems of freedom of movement.

Hundreds of Moslems have demonstrated in recent days for the right to be able to return to homes in Serb-held territory, with one rally almost degenerating into violence at a checkpoint manned by Polish troops.

IFOR officials said that there were thousands of such would-be returnees, but that Serb civilians were not prepared to let them return to their homes, which in any case have mostly been occupied by Serb refugees.

"If you talk to locals, they will tell you they don't want one single Moslem here in Doboj," one IFOR official said on condition of anonymity.

Efforts to talk to locals in Doboj proved as futile as they were risky, with the threat of immediate arrest hanging over journalists who work in Serb-held territory without official accreditation from Serb authorities.

But the resentment felt towards those who would try and return to Serb-held towns was made manifestly clear last week when some 200 Serbs from Teslic rallied to protest demands by Moslems and Croats that they be allowed to return.

B-H: PM Muratovic Comments on Mostar Situation

LD0203182096 Mostar Radio-Televizija Mostar Radio in Serbo-Croatian 1530 GMT 29 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] As we have already reported, a delegation of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Government, led by Prime Minister Hasan Muratovic, is on its way to Iran, where it will have talks with officials of this friendly country about economic aid of the Islamic Republic of Iran for Bosnia. En route for Iran, Prime Minister Muratovic and his aides made a stopover in Zagreb, where Muratovic gave a brief interview for Mostar Radio-Televizija on the situation in Mostar. This is what he said:

[Begin Muratovic recording] I believe that these are once again some extremist forces. Before leaving for Zagreb, I also had talks with President Kresimir Zubak and here, too, I exchanged views with some people. They claimed that they did not know of any such statements having been issued by any of the officials in power in western Mostar. I hope this is not because we thought that, through talks in Rome and later on in a very useful meeting with the Croatian Government in Split, we overcame these weaknesses. We gave our full support to the complete implementation of all Rome agreements.

I believe things will calm down. The best thing would be if taxi drivers from western Mostar joined their colleagues in eastern Mostar and formed a joint rank. It would perhaps be the best solution. However, there can be no question of any further separation or attempts to lay claims on this district. We know what this district is and why it was set up. I am sure that the police there will introduce law and order and create a center of a unified town. Everyone has the right to live and work there. [end recording]

B-H: Mostar Mayor Favors Elections, Further Talks With EU

LD2702204496 Mostar Croatian Radio Herzeg-Bosnia in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 27 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Mijo Brajkovic, president of the municipal council [mayor], received Garcia Ceres, head of the Spanish delegation with the EU monitoring mission in Zagreb, in his office this morning on an official visit. Later he also received John (?Ludlow), political adviser to the U.S. ambassador to Bosnia-Herzegovina. Zoran Kresic reports:

[Kresic] Garcia Ceres, head of the Spanish delegation with the EU monitoring mission in Zagreb, described today's visit to Mostar, which is the first in a series

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of visits to cities hosting monitoring missions, as very useful. [passage omitted]

Mayor Brajkovic said that during the Spanish diplomat's visit they discussed problems arising after the Rome summit.

[Begin Brajkovic recording] Ceres is pleased to see that the situation in Mostar is quite good regarding the freedom of movement and the police forces. He asked for our opinion on how to proceed. I said that Mostar could not be viewed in isolation. This proved to be true of the [Bosnia-Herzegovina] Federation as well. Many things have to happen in the Federation first, and only then can they be reflected in Mostar.

It is not enough that freedom of movement exists only in Mostar, it has to exist in other cities, too, so that everything can function as it should.

These are basic issues. I also said that one of the essential issues at the moment were elections. We have to have elections as soon as possible so that municipal and city leaderships are elected in a democratic way. This is a step further in the life of this city. [end recording]

Mayor Brajkovic had the following comment on the Koschnick's resignation:

[Begin Brajkovic recording] He knows best whether he is capable of continuing to work in Mostar or not. Our task is to cooperate. We know that we have to [words indistinct] in the city of Mostar; the only solution for the city of Mostar is to continue with the talks. We do not know who will replace Mr. Koschnick now, but yesterday we reached a decision to continue talks with the EU. [end recording]

B-H: Koljevic Links 'Economic Measures,' Region's Safety

AU0303150296 Belgrade Radio Beograd Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Nikola Koljevic, vice president of the Serb Republic [Serb-held areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina], has said that the suspension of sanctions, which Slobodan Milosevic managed to obtain in Rome, represents salvation for the people in the Serb Republic.

Koljevic said that economic measures would alleviate the situation far more than the work of humanitarian organizations could, adding that most of the aid has been coming from Yugoslavia. The fact that the measures dividing the two parts of the Serb nation have been lifted is of primary economic significance, Koljevic added.

According to him, from the political point of view, the suspension of sanctions against the Serb Republic is proof that the war on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, and particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina, could not be reignited. If there is a limit on arms, and if economic ties strengthen and there is foreign capital, I believe that we are safe from dangerous armed conflicts, and that is of the utmost political significance, Nikola Koljevic concluded.

B-H: Kasagic Seeks Greater Guarantees for Sarajevo Serbs

LD0303164496 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1209 GMT 3 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Novi Sad, March 3 (TANJUG)—Republika Srpska (RS) Premier Rajko Kasagic said that the international community could have given greater guarantees to Serbs living in Sarajevo suburbs, which under the peace plan are to be taken over by the Muslim-Croat Federation.

Commenting [on] the mass departure of Serbs from Sarajevo municipalities, Kasagic said in an interview published by the Novi Sad daily DNEVNIK that the agreement from the recent summit on Bosnia in Rome was obviously insufficient guarantee for the Serbs to go on living in the city.

Fearing reprisals by the Muslim-Croat authorities, who will take control over the entire Sarajevo area on March 20, about 40,000 Serbs left their homes in five Sarajevo municipalities which at the time of the signing of the Dayton peace agreement were part of RS.

Kasagic, who represented RS at the last meeting of the contact group in Rome, said that the Serb entity will be a modern democratic community in which every person, regardless of his religion, nationality, or any other affiliation, will feel safe.

Private property, an open market and democracy will be the basis of the future development of RS, Kasagic said.

B-H: Bosnian Serbs Threaten New Break With NATO

AU0203161396 Paris AFP in English 1517 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, March 2 (AFP)—The Bosnian Serbs have hinted they might sever some ties with the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) force in Bosnia, a NATO official said Saturday.

General Andrew Cumming said he did not know exactly why the Serbs had threatened not to attend military committee meetings in the future.

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The decision, however, followed the UN war crimes tribunal decision Friday to charge Bosnian Serb General Djordje Djukic, the logistics chief of the Serb army, with war crimes.

"We are aware of a letter that the VRS (Bosnian Serb army) up in NMD north (northern Bosnia) has delivered," to the NATO command in northern Bosnia, General Andrew Cumming, said.

The letter suggests "a possibility that they may not attend military committees in the future," Cumming said.

The letter "does not give the indictment of General Djukic as the reason for the possibility that they may not attend military committees in the future," Cumming said.

"It does not say it is not the reason but it does not say it is the reason," he added.

The Serbs broke off contacts with the NATO-led peace Implementation Force (IFOR) on February 8 after Djukic and another senior Serb officer were arrested by Bosnian government police.

Contacts were only restored two weeks later, after which the UN Security Council lifted international economic and travel sanctions imposed on the Serbs in 1994.

"We obviously acknowledge and respect the decisions made by ICT in their business and we do call on the government of the Serb Republic...to honour the decision that has been made by this independant body," Cumming said.

"We also ask the parties...to discourage any acts of retribution they may feel they want to take in response to this decision," he added.

The NATO official refused to give further details of the letter.

B-H: Karadzic Appeals to Milosevic To Help Sarajevo Serbs

LD0203210696 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 2036 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 2 Mar (SRNA)—Radovan Karadzic, president of the [Bosnian] Serb Republic, today sent a letter to Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, appealing for help for the population of Serb Sarajevo.

The letter stresses that "the situation in Serb Sarajevo is very difficult from the security and political point of view."

"International mediators have abused the agreement reached in Rome, so the federal police are abusing, intimidating, and maltreating Serb people," Karadzic stressed in his letter and added:

"We urgently need help in accommodating, receiving, and evacuating people and their property.

"Mr. President, please use your authority to help ensure that as many transport vehicles as possible are sent to the Serb Republic as a matter of urgency and to ensure the release of 20 fuel tankers, the property of the Serb Republic Government, which are being held in Loznica," President Karadzic's letter says.

B-H: Transfer of Power 'Will Be Met' According to Plan

LD0303105096 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1007 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 3 Mar (SRNA)—It has been confirmed at a meeting of representatives from the Serb Republic Internal Affairs Ministry and the international police forces that all deadlines will be met, according to the Dayton agreement, concerning the transfer of power in the Serb Sarajevo regions to the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation.

SRNA's correspondent reported today [3 March] that it was confirmed that the federal police would enter Hadzici on 6 March, Ilidza and part of Trnovo on 12 March, and Novo Sarajevo and Stari Grad on 19 March.

However, Muslim media are still reporting that the transfer of power will be completed ahead of schedule.

B-H: Bosnian Serbs Seek More UN Policemen in Sarajevo

LD0203193696 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1839 GMT 2 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pale, March 2 (TANJUG)—The Interior Ministry of Republika Srpska (R.S.) has sought more United Nations policemen in Sarajevo to secure the freedom of movement and the protection of property in this city.

A letter to the command of the international force on Friday [1 March] pointed out that the transfer of authority onto the organs of the Muslim-Croat Federation in sections of the Serb Sarajevo was accompanied by a large number of incidents provoked by the Federation's police and citizens.

Additional guarantees for the Serbs leaving the Serb parts of Sarajevo, because they do not want to live under the rule of the Muslim-Croat Federation, were sought on Friday also by the R.S. Government.

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The R.S. authorities reacted to the incidents that have taken place in the past few days during the transfer of two Serb Sarajevo municipalities to the Federation.

Last week in Vogosca and last Wednesday in Ilijas, Muslim civilians and the newly-arrived federal police had terrorized and stoned Serb families who were moving out of these districts refusing to stay under the new authorities.

B-H: Bildt 'Arbitration' Statement Surprises Brcko Serbs

AU0103200796 Banja Luka Srpski Radio Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 29 Feb 96

[Report by Marko Draganic]

[FBIS Translated Text] Carl Bildt, the international community's envoy for the implementation of the civilian part of the Dayton accord, visited Brcko today. Marko Draganic reports from there.

[Draganic] Carl Bildt, UN envoy for the implementation of the civilian part of the Dayton accord, visited Brcko today as Mayor Miodrag Pajic's guest. Pajic introduced Mr. Bildt to the current situation in the town, particularly the accommodation of Sarajevo refugees who do not want to live under the authority of the Muslim-Croat federation.

Mayor Pajic pointed out that there is a shortage of food and toiletries for the approximately 25,000 refugees who are currently living in the town. Carl Bildt expressed the readiness of the UNHCR [UN High Commissioner for Refugees] to help with these needs.

Carl Bildt's statement, that the town of Brcko is a matter of arbitration as are the demarcation lines around the town, caused a great deal of confusion and surprise among the Brcko authorities. The mayor responded to this by saying that if the arbitration is not favorable for the Serb side, then another exodus of Serbs will occur, and the Serb Republic will be split in half, which is contrary to the Dayton accord.

Asked by your reporter whether there is a possibility of new sanctions being imposed on our republic, Mr. Bildt said that it is possible if he or Admiral Smith informs the Security Council that the Dayton accord is being violated by the Serbs.

At the end of his visit to Brcko, Carl Bildt said he expected that the roads and the destroyed bridges around Brcko will be repaired and used by all the interested sides very soon.

B-H: Efforts To Recreate Multiethnic State Criticized

AU0103180196 Banja Luka Srpska Televizija in Serbo-Croatian 1930 GMT 28 Feb 96

[Commentary by Milos Pribic]

[FBIS Translated Text] The other day, in Sarajevo, UNHCR [UN High Commissioner for Refugees] spokesman Kris Janowski expressed concern about the exodus of the Sarajevo Serbs. Yesterday, in Banja Luka, international community representative Carl Bildt, having mediated a trilateral meeting of prime ministers, expressed satisfaction with the success of his mission. Janowski is concerned because the case of Sarajevo undermines the multiethnic concept of not just that city but all of former Bosnia, so he says: "The fewer Serbs remain in Sarajevo, the slimmer the chances of putting Bosnia together again." Furthermore, the UNHCR spokesman blames the Muslim government, but also the Serb Republic leadership, for the Sarajevo exodus. Bildt is pleased because he mediated a high-level of trilateral agreement on some practical issues in his civilian domain yesterday. Those issues could pave the way for the reintegration of the former Bosnia.

The contradictory positions and statements of the two high representatives of the international community have a common denominator, because their objective is the creation of multiethnic Bosnia. All that is accounted for by an otherwise noble intention: to establish a lasting and stable peace. If Chris Janowski's accusations against the Serbs are discarded as improper, to say the least—because to blame the Serb Republic leadership for the ethnic cleansing of Sarajevo is tantamount to rubbing salt into the wound—and his efforts to recreate former Bosnia are taken seriously, if Carl Bildt's optimism is accepted as realistic, then for the sake of a lasting and stable peace, we must ask the following: What does the insistence on recreating multiethnic Bosnia entail? Is the international community not trying to put us back where we were in the early 1990s? Or perhaps the international community wants to recreate the regional melting pot under which its masters could turn up the heat whenever they want and however high they need it. The multiethnic character of the former Bosnia caused the civil war. It is therefore preposterous to establish a lasting peace by recreating the cause of the war.

A word or two for domestic consumption, i.e. for those who say that everything outside the concept of recreated brotherhood and unity is saber rattling. It is not the nation and the national state that is the utmost ideal of a Serb as of any civilized person, but democracy and prosperity. A Serb does not consider

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an isolated, self-contained state to be his or her ideal. Even if one wanted that, it would not be possible in the world that has become a global village. However, the nation as the preservation of one's spirituality and the national state as a mechanism guaranteeing spiritual autochtonism, free interaction with the global village, among other things, are indispensable at the present level of civilization. In other words, to create a free national state is a priority, and establishing ties with other countries and the rest of the world can follow afterwards on the basis of bilateral interests. Anyway, did this war not show that we were attacked as a nation and that we must defend ourselves as a nation?

B-H: IFOR 'Behavior' in Kalesija 'Undermining' Economy

AU0103205996 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 1 Mar 96

[Report by Abdulah Sultanovic from Kalesija—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the face of the accumulated problems and disagreements between Kalesija municipality and the Implementation Force [IFOR] troops, the residents of Kalesija were left with no other option but to turn to the public. A statement by Mr. Sultanovic, deputy Kalesija municipal commander, says the following:

With the signing of the Dayton accord, the residents of Kalesija municipality were finally relieved, because the killing and the daily worrying for one's life has stopped. However, simultaneously, they learned the painful fact that about 20 percent of the municipality's territory [words indistinct] Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The military part of the Dayton accord is honored. The villages of Nemici, (?Hemlijas), Staro Selo, Bulatovci, Zelina, and Jelovo Brdo were returned to the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation; however, they are ruined to such an extent that one cannot expect to live in them for a long time. The aggressor destroyed everything that could be destroyed.

The IFOR troops' arrival, coupled with the implementation of the Dayton accord, was expected to bring relief; however, they also brought certain problems and disagreements regarding IFOR behavior. For their requirements, the IFOR forces occupied all business facilities and other installations suitable for their accommodation in the center of Kalesija, and only two enterprises, namely, the Unis [word indistinct] stockholding company and the Fascikal stockholding company managed to sign contracts on the use of their buildings in exchange for compensation. For all other installations, IFOR did not seek the approval of the municipal and cantonal authorities and it had not signed agreements on the use of the latter.

IFOR troops completely changed the purpose and the structure of the Rajnici Gornji sports airfield, which had a grass runway, by covering it with a great quantity of grit. Significantly, throughout the war, this airfield was utilized for cultivation to provide food for a great number of expellees from [word indistinct] and the eastern part of Kalesija municipality. Apart from numerous other installations that IFOR troops use in Kalesija municipality, [words indistinct] commercial unit Nemici of the (?Spreca) agricultural enterprise from Donje Vukovine. Before the war, the building housed 800 heads of breeding [word indistinct]. The buildings were damaged in the war, however, they were soon protected from further decay by deploying guards there. In the most brutal way and without anyone's approval, IFOR troops entered these buildings, disarmed the security guards, and chased them away. On entering the buildings, IFOR demolished the greatest part of them to adapt them to its requirements, by which they caused great material damage to the buildings and to the Spreca agricultural enterprise. Despite the efforts of the municipal authorities to establish a correct relationship on the use of commercial installations with IFOR, it continues to turn a deaf ear.

Such behavior by IFOR troops in Kalesija municipality constitutes the grossest possible destruction of the social property and is undermining Bosnia-Herzegovina's economic development. The highest cantonal officials were also informed of these IFOR actions. [sentence indistinct]

B-H: Tuzla Mayor Appeals for Help To Relaunch Industry

AU0403162596 Paris AFP in English 1608 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina, March 4 (AFP)—Authorities in the northeast Bosnian town of Tuzla appealed Monday for help from international donors and the Sarajevo-based central government to relaunch war-battered regional industry.

Speaking to journalists in this northeast Bosnian town, Tuzla's mayor, Selim Beslagic, said that on-going aid programmes were not targetting the most needy areas of the economy and that investment in industry was essential to keep it—and Bosnia—alive.

Tuzla is the third largest industrial centre in Bosnia, after Sarajevo and the central town of Zenica, but, "if we don't start up production again, in four or five months we will end up with nothing but scrap metal," Beslagic warned.

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The future health of the Bosnian economy depends on the northeast's coal and salt mines and chemical plants, Beslagic said.

The mayor, who is from an opposition party that stood against Bosnia's ruling Democratic Action (SDA) party in 1990 elections, said that foreign investors, including the US Agency for International Development (USAID) had shied away from backing regional industry because it is predominantly state-run.

The USAID recently announced a 10-million-dollar aid package for the region.

Beslagic said the Tuzla town hall had sent a letter to both the central Bosnian government and the Moslem-Croat federation urging swift action to find a way to save the industrial plants which dot the northeast Bosnian landscape.

"Workers returning to their factories after demobilisation cannot hide their disappointment at the fact that they can't work and can't live off their work," Beslagic said.

"The state doesn't show an interest in facing up to these problems or revitalising production," the mayor said.

Although he was only speaking for industry in northeast Bosnia, economists said Beslagic's warning is indicative of a countrywide problem, where aid programs have thus far tended to target emergency and humanitarian problems rather than reconstruction and development.

B-H: Energy Minister Discusses DM17 Million EU Loan

AU2202191796 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 22 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] As is already known, the EU has approved 62.5 million ECU, that is, more than 100 million German marks [DM] for the renovation and reconstruction of Bosnia-Herzegovina. A letter of approval of the donation totalling 9 million ECU, or about DM17 million, for financing parts of the energy sector, was signed at the Ministry of Energy, Mining, and Industry of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina in Sarajevo today.

The signing of the letter was attended by our editor Mladen Bosnjak:

[Begin recording] [Bosnjak] The ultimate users of these considerable funds are the Electricity Generation Board of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Sarajevo Gas Company, and the EU money will be used for repairing thermal units in Tuzla and Kakanj, electricity generating stations and transmission grids in the Krusac, Vinac, Vozuca, and Doboj regions, and a natural gas network for [word indistinct] of flats in the Sarajevo Municipality of Novi Grad.

The letter of approval was signed by special EU envoy (Enato Betti) for the EU and Enver Kreso, minister of energy, mining, and industry in the Government of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Following a brief signing ceremony, we asked Minister Kreso for a brief comment:

[Kreso] [Words indistinct] the first concrete aid. There are many [words indistinct] aid and we still cannot see how it is going to be implemented. We have exerted much effort on repairs [word indistinct] according to the criteria of the European Bank and the World Bank. We will still have to wait for them. This is why I think that the first quality of this one is that it is concrete aid, which is to become quickly operational and [words indistinct] opened for the second installment, on which an approval letter will also be signed soon after this one.

I think that [words indistinct] is important as it will enable us to [words indistinct] raise the population's standard of living and industrial capacities. This will open [words indistinct] new values and employment of new workers. [Words indistinct] social programs and suchlike. [passage omitted]

B-H: National Bank Governor on Transactions With FRY

LD0103124896 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1147 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 1 Mar (SRNA)—Manojlo Coric, governor of the National Bank of the [Bosnian] Serb Republic, has confirmed in a statement for SRNA that a system for financial transactions between the Serb Republic and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia [FRY] was put in place this morning. These two states are to reach agreement on ways of regulating this system.

Governor Coric stressed the importance of the lifting of FRY sanctions on the Serb Republic on the same day as the UN Security Council lifted sanctions [against the FRY].

"The lifting of sanctions and the setting up of a financial transactions' system is contributing to the establishment of economic cooperation between the FRY and the Serb Republic and the revitalization of our economy. After all, most of the Serb Republic's production and industrial capacity is geared toward the Yugoslav economy," Governor Coric said. According to him, trade with the FRY should begin soon.

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B-H: Krajisnik Interviewed on Sarajevo Exodus

LD0303234196 Pale Srpska Televizija in Serbo-Croatian 1930 GMT 3 Mar 96

[Studio interview with Momcilo Krajisnik, Bosnian Serb Republic Assembly speaker, by an unidentified correspondent—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Correspondent] Our bulletin guest is Momcilo Krajisnik, Bosnian Serb Republic Assembly speaker, so we can discuss the situation in Sarajevo. Mr. Krajisnik, good evening and welcome.

[Krajisnik] Good evening.

[Reporter] Before we begin the interview, I propose to see today's reports on the situation in Sarajevo and on the population's exodus. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. Krajisnik, we have just seen everyday scenes from the past few days in the Sarajevo-Romanija region. The exodus of the population from Serb Sarajevo is unfolding with great difficulties, the biggest problems being supply of fuel and transport vehicles. Could the situation improve in the next few days?

[Krajisnik] [Passage omitted] We have been warning the international community both through a political and other struggle [as received] for a just solution that such an exodus was imminent and that Serbs cannot receive just a verbal guarantee in order to remain in Sarajevo.

I do not know what the reason was for the international community's decision to adopt such a step, because the introduction of federal police, so suddenly and with accelerated deadlines, have hastened the departure as well and have completely destroyed any hopes that people could remain in Serb Sarajevo.

We are now confronted with a mass exodus and, consequently, we need many vehicles and large quantities of fuel. [passage omitted]

I do not understand what the international community had in mind. If it had wanted to resettle the Serbs, this was a brutal way to do it and is inadmissible.

If it had wanted the Serbs to stay in Sarajevo, then the people who have been doing this job were complete political ignoramuses who had not heeded the warnings that the Serbs would not stay. Because verbal support does not mean anything.

Serbs had asked for so little. And everyone would have gained so much—the international community and the whole of Bosnia-Herzegovina. And now you see what happened. Something has happened that is almost beyond repair.

[Correspondent] People are moving out. This is what we have also seen in our reports. However, new accusations were addressed recently to the Serb Republic leadership saying it literary forced Sarajevo Serbs to move out. What would you tell all those people who are saying such things?

[Krajisnik] Our people are now embittered, they are in a very difficult situation. They believe absolutely everyone is to blame. One thing is the problem of moving out and the lack of vehicles, but another thing is the problem of accommodating the people, because such a large number of Serbs cannot be easily accommodated. This is fertile soil for all manipulations. All those who have been saying that the Serb leadership is to blame—they are in fact the culprits. They are trying to deny their responsibility by attacking us. However, I believe that our people are aware of that.

The only way out would have been to have succeeded in staying in Serb Sarajevo. It is obvious that the international community, through propaganda and its passive conduct, particularly the Muslim-Croat federation by its actions, thwarted any resistance to make it possible for the Serbs to remain in Sarajevo [as heard].

We said on several occasions that we should proceed in accordance with what is envisaged in the Dayton agreement, that Sarajevo should be a district in which we would have realized our rights. All those from outside who have been calling on the Serbs to stay in Sarajevo, even those from the Muslim-Croat federation, they in fact wanted the Serbs to stay under Muslim authorities.

We were able to stay there, and we kept saying it, only under our own local authorities, with our own police. The international community even accepted that. However, at one stage when the international community felt that a great number of Serbs left the area, it changed its position; it simply encouraged the speedy entrance of the federal police, and, by various sorts of propaganda and provocations, it forced a small fraction of the Serbs who stayed in Sarajevo to leave this area.

I would say that now we have to overcome this problem. With Sarajevo the international community has eliminated the last link which could have maintained some sort of coordination, some sort of membrane of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Some great level of cooperation and the survival of some union of Bosnia-Herczgovina cannot be expected following the collapse of the international community's policies in Sarajevo. [passage omitted]

I would also like to praise the government, which has been working round-the-clock. Considerable material

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resources have been earmarked. Some people who should have helped assumed unfair attitudes, and the same goes for international organizations, primarily the UNHCR, which has a spokesman who keeps accusing the Serb leadership; he in fact wishes to conceal his failure to get involved in this job, whereas his role is topical precisely at this time. We have to fight all these difficulties.

We reject any accusations and do not wish to answer to any foreign envoys, nor to any people in the federation; we just wish to accommodate the population. The people are aware of who is to blame, whether they wished to leave Sarajevo, whether they were intimidated or were persuaded to leave. It is certain that nobody persuaded them to leave. We had done everything to keep them there, normally, with their own authorities. This is the nuance that makes the difference. Mr. Pejanovic's call, who wanted them to stay under Muslim authorities, is different from the call by us, the leadership, who wanted them to stay there under our own authorities, the same as people in Brussels, Geneva, and other multiethnic and complex cities.

It is incomprehensible that the international community should be dealing so much with Mostar, wishing to create a number of municipalities, some Muslim and some Croat, while in Sarajevo it is simply introducing the federal police, which had not even been set up prior to this, with the only task of intimidating the Serbs and making them leave. We even set up commissions to ascertain the state of affairs, but these provocations are impermissible and the Serbs cannot tolerate provocations and humiliation. That is even worse than being maltreated, even though there has also been maltreatment.

[Correspondent] Mr. Krajisnik, let us continue our conversation after we have seen a report on the accommodation of Sarajevo Serb refugees. [passage omitted] Today we had a chance to see video reports broadcast by certain TV stations showing buildings burning in Grbavica. It is not in the interest of the Serb side to do this. It is more likely that this is in the interest of the Muslim side in order to get the federal police to enter Grbavica earlier than envisaged.

[Krajisnik] Well, it is difficult to determine the cause of any incident now. However, it is clear that there are so many people from the federation in the territory of the Serb Republic that all combinations are possible. I just want to say that the goal of various programs and propaganda from the other side and from abroad is to demonize the Serb Republic leadership and to justify the exodus. They want to show the Serbs as barbarians who are setting their property on fire, even setting state property and, as they say, Muslim property on fire. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] One more question, Mr. Krajisnik, about rumors that the federal police could enter certain parts of Serb Sarajevo before the deadline. What is the truth?

[Krajisnik] The Serb side did not agree to this plan on the deployment of the federal police. The international police and the other side are behaving in accordance with the plan which was adopted unilaterally. I have to say that this was an important contributing factor to the Serb exodus and any further changes to the new plan will make the situation even more complicated.

We had a meeting with the international police several days ago and we told them that they had to do their best to gain the Serb trust regarding the deadlines and the mandate of the international police. The international police are not able to control the federal police. There were no major incidents, but there were smaller incidents, some people were attacked. The international police have to eliminate this in coordination with the federal police.

We must persevere through all these events in Sarajevo. If our decision is to leave Sarajevo, we should sever the link with Muslims and Croats, which was in the interest of those who supported a multiethnic Bosnia-Herzegovina. We must build our republic now.

It is certain that there will be many difficult moments, a difficult period. If they wanted us to leave Sarajevo, all we can do now is to simply sever the last link that connected us. The implementation of the Dayton agreement would have been much more difficult if we stayed in Sarajevo, because Sarajevo bound us in a stronger way. Now there is no more linking, neither formal nor practical.

[Correspondent] Mr. Krajisnik, thank you for taking part in our program.

B-H: UNHCR Says Serbs 'Torching' Sarajevo Homes

AU0403120996 Paris AFP in English 1118 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, March 4 (AFP)—Bosnian Serbs are torching houses they are leaving in a Sarajevo district which is due to come back under the control of the mainly Moslem government, a spokesman for the UN refugee agency said here Monday.

"We are extremely concerned by the torching of houses in Grbavica," a city-centre Serb-held district of Sarajevo which comes under Moslem control later this month,

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said Kris Janowski, a spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

Janowski said two buildings in Grbavica—one of them a school—had been destroyed by fire over the weekend.

Buildings had also burnt down in some of the four other districts of Sarajevo coming back to the control of the mainly Moslem government, he said.

Thousands of Serbs have in recent weeks left the Sarajevo districts of Grbavica, Vogosca, Ilijas, Ilidza and Hadzici ahead of their return to the Bosnian government.

Janowski said the UNHCR was concerned about the security of those Serbs—mainly elderly—who had chosen to remain.

"People are barricading themselves (in their homes).... Criminals are getting around trying to break in," he said.

Providing security was the responsibility initially of the departing Serb authorities, and then the incoming police of the Bosnian Moslem-Croat federation, he added.

Trying to provide some facilities for those who had stayed in the districts, the UNHCR had opened bakeries in Vogosca, Ilijas and Hadzici while medical charities have started a little clinic the UNHCR office in Ilidza, he said.

Hazdici, which is due to come under Moslem control, "is empty," Janowksi said.

The latest estimate of the Serb population remaining in Ilidza, where Bosnian government police start patrols next week, is 10,000, and there are some 3,000 in Grabavica, he said.

B-H: UN Human Rights Envoy Says 'Cruelties' Continue

AU0403131996 Vienna Oesterreich Eins Radio Network in German 1100 GMT 4 Mar 96

[Report by Barbara Ladinser on news conference by UN Human Rights envoy Elisabeth Rehn in Vienna on 4 March—recorded; Rehn statements in English with superimposed German translation]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ladinser] Peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina is in its very early days, says Elisabeth Rehn, and it is still at risk.

[Rehn] Unfortunately, I still have to report cruelties against human rights. Houses are still being burned down and looted. People are still being tortured. We do not know how many people are being held in the prisons because of their opinions. It is a very slow process.

[Ladinser] Rehn will soon present her next report to the UN Security Council. She wants to make sure that war will never happen again in Bosnia. That is why she is particularly concerned with children who have seen and have to overcome things which no child should have to experience. The children of Bosnia, Elisabeth Rehn says, must not become a lost generation, which carries the seeds of war into the future. What outcome does Ms. Rehn expect the roundtable talks in Vienna to produce?

[Rehn] At the beginning, I did not believe that this roundtable could change anything. We have had so many conferences. But when I saw the list of participants, I realized that all the important players will be present. And now that the first steps have been done in implementing the Dayton agreement, we must find out what we can do together, who shall do what. There are so many people involved. What is important now is that we establish a mechanism that lays down who shall be responsible for what.

[Ladinser] But who has the means and the power to implement what she as human rights envoy and all the other human rights organizations in Bosnia demand? The governments?

[Rehn] They do have the power, because the governments make the decisions and because the EU controls the major part of the financial contributions. So far, the Americans have not paid anything toward the implementation of the civilian measures, which is the most important part of this.

[Ladinser] Elisabeth Rehn criticizes the governments, saying that so far everything has gone far too slowly, especially with regard to reconstruction. She says that human rights can only be based on a civilized, democratic society.

B-H: SR's Krajisnik Protests Gen Djukic's Arrest

LD0203235096 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 2322 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sarajevo, 2 March (SRNA)—Momcilo Krajisnik, president of the Serb Republic [SR] People's Assembly, responded to the General Djordje Djukic's indictment by saying that "such an approach on the part of the Hague Tribunal is almost unbelievable".

"We are used to being treated unjustly in this war but it was with disbelief that we received the report on Gen. Djukic's indictment," Krajisnik said.

He said that the SR's policy was to cooperate with the international community in the implementation of the Dayton agreement but, as he said, "when such events are

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taking place, we can only doubt the further impartiality of the international community and all those working for it." [passage omitted]

"How can we guarantee the security of those Serbs who, trusting the international community and its representatives, take part in various meetings in the Muslim part of Sarajevo? How can we reassure these Serbs regarding their [the international community's] impartiality and the promised freedom of movement?" Krajisnik asked.

"If a general and a colonel of the [Bosnian] Serb Army were not secure, who can guarantee the Serb people's security so they can stay in the Muslim territory," Krajisnik said and warned that this step by the Hague Tribunal was "a great breakdown of justice."

B-H: Djukic Pleads 'Not Guilty' at War Crimes Tribunal

AU0403123396 Paris AFP in English 1206 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Hague, March 4 (AFP)—Bosnian Serb General Djordje Djukic entered a "not guilty" plea Monday when he appeared before the UN war crimes tribunal on charges of crimes against humanity.

"I plead not guilty and I have done nothing," the 62-year-old general said at his first appearance before the International Criminal Tribunal under oath.

Djukic, who is thought responsible for the Serbs' relentless shelling of Sarajevo, was charged on Friday.

"I want to stress that after reading the charges laid against me, any member of the armed forces could be here in my place," he added.

B-H: Blaskic 'Willing' To Testify in Hague Court

AU0103190996 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] General Tihomir Blaskic, whom the UN international war crimes tribunal accused of a massacre of Bosniak civilians in Ahmici in 1993, is willing to hand himself in to this court, Blaskic's lawyer, Zvonimir Hodak, told the Croatian paper NACIONAL.

Gen. Blaskic is willing to voluntarily submit himself to the tribunal to prove his innocence, Hodak said. So far, The Hague tribunal has charged six Croats with war crimes, but not a single one of them has been captured yet.

B-H: Ex-UNPROFOR Commander Suspected of War Crimes

AU0103172296 Hanau NOVA BOSNA in Serbo-Croatian 1 Mar 96 p 20

[Unattributed report: "General McKenzie To Go to The Hague?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 29 February—Hasan Muratovic, the prime minister of the Government of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, stated yesterday that there were well-founded suspicions that the former UNPROFOR [UN Protection Force] commander in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Canadian General Lewis McKenzie, committed war crimes in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Prime Minister Muratovic pointed out that charges will be brought up against Gen. McKenzie if enough evidence against him are collected.

"Documentation on Gen. McKenzie is being collected, and I do not know at which stage the issue is right now," Prime Minister Muratovic said, adding there were a number of testimonies on many crimes committed by the Bosnian Serbs in the Sarajevo suburb of Vogosca in which the Canadian general had taken part. Last week, the federal police assumed control of this Sarajevo suburb.

B-H: Report Suggests Presidency Members Set To Resign

AU0403105296 Ljubljana SVIJET in Serbo-Croatian 29 Feb 96 p 20

[Unattributed report: "Komsic's Move"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Presidency of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina may disappear even before the elections, when it is envisaged to be altered and transformed. A report that Dr. Ivo Komsic will resign is in circulation, while Nijaz Skenderagic from the Social Democratic Party is announcing that "we can expect new departures by Presidency members." It is not clear whether he is referring to his party chief, Nijaz Durakovic. It should not come as a surprise at all, however, if Durakovic makes such a move. It is believed that Stjepan Kljujic and perhaps even the Pejanovic-Mijatovic tandem will not wait until the elections as members of the withering presidency. The clashes within the Presidency are mostly caused by political reasons. However, there are other reasons for the possible departures. Not the least significant here is that in peace certain privileges and immunities of the Presidency members are not as great as they were during the war, and thus the individuals now find them easy to relinquish.

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B-H: Karadzic Intervenes in Novi Grad SDS Problems

AU0103193696 Banja Luka Srpska Televizija in Serbo-Croatian 1930 GMT 28 Feb 96

[Report by Veljko Babic]

[FBIS Translated Text] Although, early in February, the municipal committee of the Serb Democratic Party [SDS] in Novi Grad [Bosanski Novi] decided to relieve municipal officials of their duties, committee members present at the 19 February session did not act on the decision. In spite of the fact that the Novi Grad Municipal Assembly is mostly composed of SDS members, most of them decided by secret ballot that Dragan Bera should remain as municipal assembly chairman, while a discussion on the work of the Municipal Executive Committee and Bera's discharge was taken off the agenda.

Serb Republic President Radovan Karadzic was also informed of the case involving the abuse of party positions. That is why, a couple of days ago, Radovan Karadzic sent a letter to Radomir Pasic, president of the Novi Grad SDS Municipal Committee, insisting that this problem be solved. To that end, several sessions of the SDS Municipal Committee and Personnel Board were recently held in Novi Grad. Following a proposal of the Personnel Board, today's Municipal Committee session made a decision, in keeping with the law on the election of committee members, to rescind the mandate of SDS committee member Dragan Bera. Bera was also relieved of his function as assembly chairman, while Mirko Sljokavica, president of the executive committee of the municipality, handed in his resignation. Novi Grad municipality is, for the time being, deprived of it leading officials, but the initiative for the election of the municipal assembly chairman was taken today, and it is expected that the process will be completed in eight days.

At today's session, SDS Municipal Committee members took a secret ballot on the confidence vote in the party president and his vice presidents. A majority vote confirmed the confidence in party President Radomir Pasic and Vice Presidents Mirko Stokic and Milan Kukavica. However, Milan Kukavica submitted his resignation. Novi Grad SDS bodies and organizations are presently engaged in election activities.

B-H: Fikret Abdic Returns to Politics, Founds New Party

AU0103161496 Novi Sad DNEVNIK in Serbo-Croatian 1 Mar 96 p 2

[Article by S. Risovic: "Babo Convinced of Victory"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Banja Luka, 29 Feb—Submitting the registration claim for the National Democratic Community [Narodna Demokratska Zajednica—NDZ] party at the local court, Fikret Abdic also attached 22,250 signatures of members and sympathizers of the new party.

Fikret Abdic is not ill, as recently reported by the Muslim radio of Sarajevo, nor has he retired from the political life of former Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is common knowledge that Velika Kladusa's Babo [Abdic's nickname] was the reason for the SDA's [Party of Democratic Action] victory in Bosnia-Herzegovina's first multiparty parliamentary elections in 1990. After his second exile from his home town, he has decided to return to the political stage of the former Bosnia-Herzegovina. Abdic has founded a new party, the NDZ, which was registered at the local court in Mostar on 16 February this year.

This fact has encouraged all moderate Muslims, especially the Muslim people in the Bihac region, because Fikret Abdic had resurrected Velika Kladusa, Buzin, and Pazin by raising "Agrokomerc" to the level of the global food production giants.

"The breakup of Bosnia-Herzegovina can only be attributed to Alija Izetbegovic, and we believe that the Muslim people will eventually realize that. An insane fundamentalist policy reduced all the peoples in Bosnia-Herzegovina to poverty, waiting for charity from humanitarian organizations in order to survive. We are for a Bosnia-Herzegovina based on a European model, and not one that would put it back by 500 years. We are convinced that the NDZ will win at the forthcoming Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation elections, because, although we respect the past, we are not interested in it, but are interested in the future," said Ibrahim Cedovic, secretary of the NDZ, the party that many prophesy will win a triumphant victory over the SDA and other parties in the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation.

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Croatia: Peace Force To End Mission, Kofi Annan To Depart

AU0103151596 Paris AFP in English 1444 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ZAGREB, March 1 (AFP)—The UN Peace Force which oversees UN operations in Bosnia and Croatia will finally close shop Saturday [2 March], a little over two months after it was replaced by the NATO-led peace Implementation Force (IFOR), a UN official said.

"The UN Peace Force officially ceases to exist tomorrow (Saturday)," UN spokesman Philip Arnold said at its headquarters in Zagreb. "It will not be replaced."

Independently run UN missions will continue in the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia [Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] and in the Croatian region of eastern Slavonia, he added.

The first UN officials arrived in Bosnia in March 1992, a few weeks before war broke out in the country.

IFOR took over from the UN Protection Force in Bosnia in December last year.

UN special envoy to former Yugoslavia Kofi Annan will meanwhile relinquish his post Saturday and return to New York.

Annan, a former head of UN peace keeping missions who succeeded Japanese dipolmat Yasushi Akashi in Zagreb last October, paid farewell visits Friday to Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and Croatian Foreign Minister Mate Granic ahead of his departure from the Balkans.

Earlier this week he travelled to Belgrade for meetings with Serbian officials and Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic.

Belgian UN commander General Jozep Schoups was Friday to take up his command in the Serb-held town of Vukovar, monitoring the agreed peaceful reintegration of some 170,000 Croatian Serbs into Croatia over a phased one-to-two year period.

Croatia: Gen Cervenko: Army Assumes Peacetime Formation

AU0403141996 Split SLOBODNA DALMACIJA in Serbo-Croatian 3 Mar 96 p 32

[HINA report: "Croatian Army Assumes Peacetime Formation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cakovec (HINA)—By demobilizing 145,000 soldiers and all vehicles that were not owned by the Croatian Army, the Croatian Army has since Saturday [2 March] actually been in its peacetime formation, General of the Corps Zvonimir Cervenko, commander of the Croatian Army General Staff, said at the Saturday ceremony in Cakovec on the occasion of handing out the medals for participation in Flash and Storm operations to the members of several units of the Medjimurje country. Medjimurje Governor Marijan Ramuscak and Father Ivan Loncar, superior of the Franciscan Monastery in Cakovec, also congratulated the recipients.

"The Croatian Army is now facing new peacetime tasks and preparations for the future. This practically means that the Croatian Army will consist of the professional units, guard units, navy and airforce units, and the relevant accompanying services. We believe that parallel to the inclusion into all other European associations, Croatia will soon be admitted into the Partnership for Peace program. However, with all the internationalization, the Croatian Army will also preserve the unique traits that celebrate our nation," Cervenko said.

Croatia: Tudjman Appoints Minister as Mayor of Zagreb

LD0403115796 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1100 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Ivic Pasalic, internal policy adviser to the president of the Republic of Croatia, gave a news conference at the presidential palace today. He spoke about the appointment of the mayor of Zagreb and the prefect of Zagreb county. Here is Zoltan Kabok reporting from the presidential palace:

[Kabok] Pasalic first informed journalists about the following:

[Begin Pasalic recording] Franjo Tudjman, president of the Republic of Croatia, decided to appoint a mayor of Zagreb [city] and a prefect of Zagreb county. On the basis of item 22, Article 2 of the Law on the City of Zagreb and item 2 of Article 33 on the Law on Local Government and Administration, on 2 March the president decided to appoint Marina Matulovic-Dropulic, currently minister of urban development, construction and housing in the Croatian Government, as mayor of Zagreb and prefect of Zagreb county. She will take up her duties on 11 March this year. [passage omitted] [end recording]

In response to a journalist's question about whether there have been any consultations [about the appointment] with the opposition parties, Pasalic stressed that there were no consultations [despite nominations proposed by the opposition] and that the appointment is the result of President Tudjman's decision.

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Croatia: Chamber Discusses Cooperation With Hague Tribunal

LD0103182296 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A discussion on the draft law on cooperation between Croatia and the international criminal tribunal [The Hague Tribunal] began in the Chamber of Deputies today. [passage omitted]

Jasenka Dudic reports:

[Dudic] During the opening discussion of the first reading of the Law on Cooperation between the Republic of Croatia and the International Criminal Tribunal, Justice Minister Miroslav Separovic said that Croatia, as a member of the United Nations, with this draft law fulfilled part of the obligations stemming from Security Council Resolution 827. [passage omitted]

Separovic said that failure to approve the law could result in grave consequences imposed by the international community.

[Begin Separovic recording] This includes all measures except the use of armed force, including the suspension of diplomatic relations. [end recording]

[Dudic] Mate Granic, deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, said that it was not possible to change the statute of the international tribunal, although Croatia was not completely satisfied with the tribunal's work.

[Begin Granic recording] The Republic of Croatia will actively fight to improve the quality of work of the tribunal. On the other hand, any resistance to passing this law—which de facto adjusts our legislature to that of the [international] tribunal—will be considered obstructive and uncooperative. [end recording]

[Dudic] On behalf of the Legislation Committee, Vice Vukojevic proposed that the discussion on the draft law be adjourned until the statute and regulations of the international tribunal are changed.

Representatives of the deputies' clubs were the first to take part in the discussion. The Istrian Democratic Assembly supported the law, although the party described it as extorted.

The Croatian Party of Rights was against the law because it encroaches upon Croatia's sovereignty.

The Socialist Democratic Party requested that the discussion be proclaimed preliminary and announced that otherwise it will abstain.

Saying they were aware of the implications of the constitutional law, the Liberals said they will support it in principle.

Deputies of the Croatian Democratic Union [HDZ] believe that the draft constitutional law should be examined from all legal, constitutional, and political aspects that are important in grasping state and national reasons. Two of the HDZ deputies, Kujundzic and Misetic, proposed that the draft constitutional law be a subject of preliminary discussions. Vladimir Seks answered that such discussions did not exist according to the Chamber's statute.

Deputy Prime Minister Ljerka Mintas-Hodak said that the international community founded the tribunal and adopted its statute without Croatia's consent, and it was difficult to expect that Croatian foreign policy could cause any changes to its statute. She pleaded for the improvement of the draft law by its second reading and the clearing up of some legal dilemmas. [passage omitted]

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Poland: Talbott, Nowak-Jezioranski Letters on NATO

WS0103155496 Warsaw RZECZPOSPOLITA in Polish 1 Mar 96 p 7

[Letters exchanged between Strobe Talbott, U.S. deputy secretary of state, and Jan Nowak-Jezioranski, national director of the U.S. Polonia Congress, dated 3 February and 26 February, respectively: "How Fast Should the Door to NATO Be Opened? According to Jan Nowak-Jezioranski, Washington Is Avoiding Clear Declarations on Accepting the States of Central and East Europe to NATO at All Costs, Giving Only Nonbinding and Rhetorical Promises"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *At the end of January, representatives of the Central and East European Coalition (consisting of 16 organizations representing 20 million U.S. citizens of Central and East Europe origin) presented U.S. President Bill Clinton with a memorandum calling for an acceleration of the process of NATO enlargement and a tougher stance of the U.S. policy toward Russia. The signatories to the document stressed that, although two years have passed since January 1994, when the U.S. Administration undertook an obligation to accept new members to the alliance, it still remains unknown when the process will be launched. At the same time, Washington, putting off the decision on NATO enlargement, is yielding to the Russian veto and threatening that it will strengthen its troops on the western border, said the Coalition.*

Two weeks later, on 12 February, Bill Clinton met with representatives of the Coalition and supported a "gradual, cautious and decisive enlargement of NATO," promising that his administration would "act accordingly" if Russia became aggressive.

Below we are publishing two letters on the admission of new members to the alliance exchanged between Strobe Talbott, U.S. deputy secretary of state, and Jan Nowak-Jezioranski, one of the leaders of the U.S. Polonia Congress.

* * *

Letter From Strobe Talbott to Jan Nowak-Jezioranski

3 February, 1996

Dear Mr. Jan!

I had the pleasure of meeting with you last week to discuss the process of NATO enlargement as well as recent developments in Central Europe and Russia. I am especially grateful to you for sharing your opinions on the most recent political developments in Poland.

I have read once again the memorandum sent on 26 January by the Coalition of Central and East Europe to President Bill Clinton. Building a new security structure in Europe and the enlargement of NATO are among the most complex challenges currently facing our foreign policy. The support of the Coalition and its members is necessary to launch the coming political debate in the right direction. The Coalition could help all Americans realize that this type of foreign policy initiative is tremendously important for our interests.

Pace of Enlargement

I agree with the Coalition that the process of enlarging the alliance is too slow, but the statement that no progress is being made is incorrect. Under U.S. leadership, NATO adopted an equable, lucid, and deliberate stance on the enlargement of the alliance, viewing Partnership for Peace as a test or a means of preparing for potential future members. The first stage of the process was finalized in 1995. In December, NATO announced the launching of the second stage: holding extensive talks with interested parties on the enlargement of the alliance. Internal reforms required for this stage of the operation to succeed will also be continued.

The talks, held with each state individually, are to provide potential NATO members with a better understanding of the obligations they will have to enter. On 29 January, the alliance informed Partnership for Peace participants of these intentions and asked which of them would be interested in taking up such a dialogue. Several states, among them Poland, have already asked for this type of consultation. We expect that other states will soon follow suit.

NATO confirms its strong will to expand, and the U.S. Government is making every effort to move the process forward. We must simultaneously resist the temptation of accelerating the process in the case of some states only. If the United States unilaterally announced which countries it considers ready to join NATO in the near future, the mandatory unanimity of our allies would be threatened. We believe this would not serve the joint objective of the Coalition and the current administration.

Temporary Guarantees of Security

NATO enlargement is the most serious obligation for the United States; it pertains to an alliance that spreads the U.S. umbrella to protect new members. Such an obligation has to be ratified by all of the NATO states, and in Washington it requires the approval of two-thirds of the Senate. In the course of making decisions on the acceptance of new members to the alliance, each member state will consider its own security interests. I hope we can count on the support of the Central and

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East European Coalition when the debate makes the Senate agenda. Approval will require time, but, once the decision is made, it will be definite and final.

The application of temporary measures, such as the NATO resolution suggested by the Coalition, which grants informal or limited guarantees of security to new members, would be a mistake. If such guarantees are to be significant, they have to have the full approval of all member countries and their parliaments. Halfway measures would not be effective, as Poland learned in 1939. Moreover, some might view such guarantees as an alternative to the future enlargement of NATO. The Russians went as far as to suggest substituting the enlargement of the alliance with security guarantees. The suggested solution could prolong the formal process of accepting new members into NATO.

Reaction to Russian Rhetoric

If NATO is to be a defensive alliance guaranteeing greater security and stability in Europe, it has to develop clearly defined cooperation with Russia, regardless of whether the alliance expands. The pace of the dialogue between NATO and Moscow will have no impact on the inevitable enlargement of the alliance.

I understand the anxieties the Coalition feels in connection with the recent developments in Russia. In reaction to mounting pressure exerted by communists and extreme nationalists in the course of the ongoing election campaign, Russian politicians and statesmen are yielding to the temptation to issue sharp statements against new members being admitted to NATO. Our attitude toward Russian leaders remains unchanged and clear—the enlargement of the alliance is proceeding. We want Russia to take part in building the future structures of European security and to make a creative contribution. However, because the enlargement of NATO is inevitable, we will continue to pursue our policy, support good relations between Moscow and the alliance, and insist on fuller integration of Russia with Europe. This will contribute to stability and security in the region. U.S. Secretary of State Christopher stressed this very strongly during a meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Primakov in Helsinki.

Military Cooperation

I fully agree with the Coalition's recommendations that military cooperation with the countries of Central Europe be developed within the Partnership for Peace program. The United States has offered to come forth with an initiative to guarantee that the Partnership for Peace program be significant and comprehensive. At the motion of President Clinton, the U.S. Congress recently earmarked $100 million for the so-called Warsaw Initiative. This will enable the financing of projects that will allow the militaries of Central Europe to get acquainted with NATO procedures and equipment.

In the coming year we are planning to carry out more than 60 military exercises with the Partnership for Peace states. This will allow the armed forces of Central Europe to adapt to the methods of cooperation applied within the alliance. NATO membership—or long-term cooperation with Partnership for Peace states without membership status—will enable them to get acquainted with the communication methods of NATO forces and the alliance's operational procedures. The armed forces of Central Europe will also have to carry out huge organizational changes and revise their military doctrines and tactics. They will also have to introduce civilian control over the armed forces, not only at the very top but also at all levels of military structures.

If we expect the armed forces of Central Europe to be modernized, we have to guarantee them access to modern Western technologies. In the beginning of this year, the Clinton administration eased U.S. regulations on distributing conventional arms to the countries of this region. Companies in the arms industry will be allowed to undertake join projects with Central European firms.

When NATO Opens Its Doors

As I told you during our meeting, I hope that over the next few years the alliance will open its doors to those countries that have taken the lead. I am concerned, however, for the countries that are further down on the list. NATO must state very clearly that its doors will be opened to all of the Partnership for Peace states. We want to guarantee that new members, by joining the alliance, will not acquire privileges at the cost of their neighbors. I particularly want relations between NATO and the Baltic states and Ukraine to be clearly defined in the subsequent stages of enlargement. The process cannot be carried out without accounting for the security interests of the Baltic states and Ukraine.

This issue deserves special attention from the Coalition of Central and East Europe. I would like to discuss this and related topics with representatives of the Coalition in due time. (...)

Strobe Talbott

• • •

Jan Nowak-Jezioranski's Reply

26 February 1996

Dear Mr. Secretary!

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Thank you very much for your invitation to the meeting we held on 6 February and for your letter dated 13 February of this year.

This is not the first opportunity I have had of admiring your attitude toward people of different convictions. This encourages me to continue our dialogue in the same spirit of sincerity.

1) If I understand your letter correctly, you reject all of the recommendations made by the Coalition of Central and East Europe, with the exception of further developing bilateral military cooperation within the Partnership for Peace project.

It is my belief that your letter will shatter the hopes of the Coalition members that this year the U.S. Administration could suggest that NATO specify which countries would be admitted to the alliance in the first stage of enlargement. We also hoped that the United States would suggest an agenda for the process because 15 NATO members will not make any decision unless the United States takes the initiative.

Please take into consideration that consultations, studies, negotiations, and so on cannot take place endlessly, without a set deadline, no matter how distant. As U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry was right to point out, the carrot ceases to be attractive if it remains out of reach. An incessant repetition of the same promise—nonbinding and rhetoric—must sooner or later undermine the credibility of the United States and the pro-American sympathies of the citizens of Central and East Europe. The United States might thus forfeit a historical opportunity of reinforcing democracy in the eastern half of the European Continent and integrating former Soviet satellite states with the euro-atlantic commonwealth of nations.

2) It also seems that in your letter you reject our appeal to the United States and our allies for a strong reaction to an escalation of Russian threats of resorting to power (nuclear arms included).

In your letter, you repeat that such a reaction could be detrimental "to cooperation with Russia." We are deeply convinced that the opposite is true. We believe that the current silent approval of this type of behavior encourages further aggressiveness by the [illegible]n leaders and might ultimately destroy all chances of partnership between Russia and NATO.

Our concern stems not from the prospect that Russia might contribute to building future European security structures, but from the fact that the Russians are ever more evidently refuting the concept. Attempts at convincing Moscow that the enlargement of NATO poses no threat to it is based on the false assumption that Russia's stance is based on fears for its own security. No realistic politician can imagine an attack launched by NATO on Russia or its direct neighbors. There is, however, ample proof that Yeltsin, Primakov, and others are against not only the enlargement of NATO, but also the very existence of a defensive military alliance. The reason for this is that they have not given up hope of regaining control over former satellite states in the future. We fear that the policy of the current administration unintentionally kindles such hopes.

Russia does not pose a global threat. Not only because of its current weakness, which may be temporary, but also because the borders of the Russian military empire have receded to the east, from the Elbe River to the Bug. Russia might, however, use its enormous nuclear arsenal, exert economic pressure, use ethnic minorities, and employ other instruments in order to force the former satellite states into subordination. The majority of the Coalition representatives do not believe there exists a direct threat to the countries of their origin. We do share, however, a deepening concern for the security of the Baltic states.

If Moscow came to the conclusion that the West would not oppose Russian attempts at reinstating military and political control either by force or by threats of employing force or by economic blackmail, these countries would be in serious danger. We are already receiving signals that this type of pressure is being exerted by the Russians. That is why we are soliciting a declaration from the United States and our allies warning that they would collectively counteract attempts at violating the sovereignty of any democratic state in Central and East Europe, whether it be by force or a threat to resort to force, or by exerting economic pressure.

This postulate does not imply an immediate broadening of the military guarantees provided for in Article 5 of the NATO Treaty. We are aware that large-scale enlargement of NATO cannot be expected soon. Neither are we demanding that the West declare in advance what it would do if the worst scenario came true. Our aim is to clearly indicate the unprofitability of risk and the costs of any type of aggression. We fear that a lack of warning from the Western allies in response to the most recent Russian threats will have a very dangerous influence on Russia's future behavior. (...)

With my deepest regards,

Jan Nowak-Jezioranski, national director of the U.S. Polonia Congress

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Poland: Rosati Affirms Goal of NATO, EU Membership

AU0403091396 Vienna DIE PRESSE in German 2-3 Mar 96 p 8

[Interview with Polish Foreign Minister Dariusz Rosati by Burkhard Bischof; place and date not given: "We Should Not Panic Every Time Kohl Goes to Moscow"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Bischof] Mr. Foreign Minister, first a question for economic expert Rosati: How can it be explained that the Polish economy has developed so positively over the past years, while storms kept raging permanently in domestic policy? Do economics and politics live their own independent lives in Poland?

[Rosati] It really seems to be so. If one looks at the domestic policy scene, it is indeed surprising that these controversies and turbulences do not have any consequences for the economy. So far, so good. However, we must not forget: If there is too much political insecurity, even a strong economy can suffer.

[Bischof] Do you expect the struggles in the triangle of power presidency-government-parliament to abate under the new political constellation?

[Rosati] There should indeed be far better cooperation among the three institutions under the new political constellation. On the other hand, there is, of course, the risk that the opposition keeps pointing out again and again—that there is simply too much concentration of power when power is dominated by one single political direction. However, we have such a constellation not only in Poland but also in France under different political signs. And I do not believe that such a constellation must necessarily lead to negative political consequences. All in all, I am optimistic. We have a new government that enjoys rather broad public support, and this lets us hope that it will remain in office until the next parliamentary elections in mid-1997.

[Bischof] Let us come to foreign policy: The new Polish Government and you yourself have not let any doubt arise that the main goals of Polish foreign policy remain unchanged: accession to the EU and NATO. Given the current state of affairs, however, it might still take quite a while for these goals to be reached.

[Rosati] There is indeed this euro-atlantic continuity in Polish foreign policy. The strategic goals—also of the new government and the new president—are accession to the EU and NATO. We pursue these goals in parallel and with equal consistency.

I do not see things so pessimistically at the moment. As regards the EU, the problem is not a political one, but the difficulties arise from the scope and costs of economic and structural adjustments. This needs time—I hope not too much. In any case, we are doing everything that is necessary.

As regards NATO membership, the problems are not so much the structural and financial preconditions. The problem is a political one. We still have to convince our Western and Eastern partners that the security of the region would not be harmed by our joining NATO.

[Bischof] In the summer of 1995, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl promised Poland that it would join the EU and NATO by the year 2000. Most recently, however, he stated in Moscow that the issue of NATO expansion should not be forced. THE ECONOMIST in London commented that Kohl will have to disappoint someone one day. Will Poland be among the disappointed ones?

[Rosati] We do not assess Chancellor Kohl's most recent statements in Moscow as a change in the German attitude. We still believe that Germany supports Poland's accession to NATO. As the Russian president's guest, Chancellor Kohl could not make any strong statements on a sensitive issue. Kohl simply did not want to embarrass election campaigner Yeltsin. Our German friends have confirmed to us that this assessment is correct.

[Bischof] Thus, you do not see any serious danger of a new special Russian-German alliance, which might go at the costs of Poland and other countries in Central and East Europe?

[Rosati] At the moment, I do not see the danger that a special German-Russian relationship might develop at the cost of Poland's interests. Russia is a very important partner for Germany. And we should not panic every time Kohl goes to Moscow or Yeltsin to Bonn. On the contrary, we in Poland must welcome it when Russia and Germany have good relations because this basically means less tension between the West and Russia.

Poland and the neighboring area are no longer a region in which agreements can be made over the heads of the countries affected. This happened often enough in history and led to many conflicts and wars.

I do not think this will happen again. Central Europe must not become a gray zone again; this is precisely what NATO must prevent because a gray zone between the NATO countries and Russia would be a permanent cause of problems, controversies, and conflicts

[Bischof] You have already announced a foreign policy offensive to convince Moscow that Poland's NATO membership would not be aimed against Russia. Your predecessors Olechowski and Bartoszewski also wanted

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to engage in this kind of activity. Do you believe you will be more successful?

[Rosati] In talking with Russia, three things are important: determination, patience, and readiness for innovation. Our determination to join NATO must be made very clear to the Russians; this point cannot be negotiated. Second, we need time and patience to make clear to our partners in the East and also in the West that our accession to NATO will not cause a revolution and is not aimed against Russia's interests. And we must be innovative so as to show the Russians alternatives.

My goal is to establish the broadest possible platform for dialogue with Russia. There are various aspects how European and Russian security can be improved.

NATO's expansion could also be interpreted as an advantage for Russia because our membership would change NATO. In NATO we would be the advocates of close cooperation with Russia. One just has to look at the map to see that we Poles cannot be interested at all in unleashing conflicts with Russia; we would be mad to do that.

[Bischof] Which role does Austria play in your foreign policy scenarios?

[Rosati] In the past, Austria played a very positive role for the countries in East and Central Europe. Even before the political upheaval in 1989, Poles, Czechs, and Hungarians came closer to Europe, partly via Austria.

Poland and Austria have very good political relations nowadays. We hope for Austria's help in joining the OECD and the EU. Austria gathered much experience in its membership negotiations with the EU, and we would be grateful if Vienna shared these experiences with us. In the economic field, Austrian investments could still be increased considerably.

Poland: President: Polish, Slovak Stances on NATO Close

LD0103144896 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1400 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] During a break in the talks with Slovak President Michal Kovac in Tatranska Javorina, Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski expressed satisfaction with the fact that the Slovak and Polish positions on NATO expansion were very close. He said that Poland's position was also very close to the stands of the Czech Republic and Hungary. Their strategic objectives are also the same, and the countries want to become members of NATO, which is not a bloc against Russia but a main pillar of a new security system in Europe, Kwasniewski said.

Poland: Czech, Polish Ministers Discuss NATO, CEFTA

LD0303183896 Prague Radiozurnal Radio Network in Czech 1600 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus and Polish Prime Minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz met on the Polish side of the Krkonose Mountains today. Our correspondent in Poland, Miroslav Karas, reports:

[Karas] Speaking at a news conference at the end of their private talks, which lasted more than 40 minutes, the two prime ministers agreed that the current [Czech-Polish] relations were intensive and praised them as very successful.

The Polish prime minister said that their views on international issues, including the enlargement of NATO, were identical. Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz said that the two countries were not competing with each other with regard to the integration process into the EU and NATO.

Reacting to this, Vaclav Klaus said that, in his view, nobody will benefit from such a race. He stressed that the Czech Republic was greatly interested in having excellent relations with Poland, saying that in the present complicated world the quality of relations between neighbors was very important.

The two prime ministers also discussed cooperation between CEFTA [Central European Free Trade Association] countries. They are in favor of enlarging CEFTA by Romania, Bulgaria, and Lithuania. In this context, Vaclav Klaus said that CEFTA must not become an exclusive club.

The prime ministers also spoke about the planned construction of the North-South highway linking our territory to the Baltic Sea.

Today's meeting, as well as coming meetings between the presidents and talks to be held by the foreign ministers in the near future, all testify to very intensive relations.

Poland: Russia Pressurizing Poland About Expressway

LD0203125496 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1200 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Andrzej Urbanczyk, the Democratic Left Alliance [SLD] press spokesman, has confirmed that Russia has been pressurizing Poland about our country's plan to build an expressway that would link the port of Kaliningrad with Belarus and Russia without crossing Lithuanian territory.

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Urbanczyk said that Poland will not be used against Lithuania or any other state. The SLD parliamentary floor group spokesman thinks that Poland can accept only such proposals that do not harm Poland's dignity.

Professor Bronislaw Geremek, chairman of the [Sejm] Foreign Affairs Commission, also confirmed that, for the past two years, Russia has been proposing that Poland build an ex-territorial transit corridor in Suwalki Province.

Geremek said that these projects were received well by local authorities.

Poland: Minister Says No Russian Corridor Through Poland

LD0203150596 Warsaw PAP in Polish 1440 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Wroclaw, 2 Mar—No Polish soldier will have to defend an ex-territorial corridor through Poland because there will be no such corridor, National Defense Minister Stanislaw Dobrzanski said in Olesnica today. He was commenting on the recent proposal by Russia and Belarus concerning the construction through northern Poland of a stretch of an ex-territorial highway to Kaliningrad.

"Poland is a country that abides by international laws, and the international transport laws are of crucial significance here. In addition, the transport operations carried out by Russia will be based on international law," Dobrzanski said.

The minister declined to give a full answer to a question concerning the new plan for the strategic defense of Poland, which is being prepared by MON [Ministry of National Defense]. He explained: "The strategic plan is secret. I can only say that it will soon be discussed by a small group of people attached to the president and government. The plan does not in any way change the Polish defense doctrine, which is based on the principles of our foreign policy and which have not changed." [passage omitted]

Poland: Opposition Leader: Poland's Security Under Threat

LD0303174596 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1500 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jan Olszewski, leader of the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland [ROP], said he is concerned about internal and external threats to state structures, which are becoming more and more apparent. At a news conference today, ROP protested against the idea of constructing in Suwalki region a highway that would link Belarus to Kaliningrad.

[Begin Olszewski recording] We assess the state of the country's security as critical because there exist both internal and external threats. The external threat is manifested by the penetration of the Polish political system, including even the highest levels of the state apparatus, by foreign intelligence agencies. Oleksy, who had to leave the prime-ministerial post because of accusations of spying for Russia, an unprecedented matter in European political life, is currently serving as an elected leader of the leading political force of the Polish Government.

This situation has manifested itself also in what has been happening in connection with the so-called Suwalki corridor. It seems that the historical associations connected with this territory, the territory of former Eastern Prussia [reference to the Danzig corridor before World War II], have been forgotten. [end recording]

Poland: SdRP Pleased With Cooperation Within Coalition

LD0203195196 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1800 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jozef Oleksy, chairman of the Social Democracy of the Polish Republic [SdRP], has said that cooperation with the Polish Peasant Party [PSL] is good and that the coalition will survive until the next parliamentary elections.

[Begin Oleksy recording] Today we assess that the state of cooperation within the coalition is satisfactory from the viewpoint of tasks the coalition agreement has set and responsibility for managing state affairs. Irrespective of certain day-to-day situations, which are now behind us and which may still emerge, we think that the PSL-SLD [PSL-Left Democratic Union] coalition will be able to remain in government until the end of this term in office. [end recording]

When pointing out that the SdRP did not try to influence the recent developments at [public] television, Jozef Oleksy expressed the hope that the resignation of Wieslaw Walendziak will make public television more objective.

[Begin Oleksy recording] This is a clearly unconcealed expectation: that there will be more objective reporting, that the reflection of public life in the country will be more balanced, and that the management of public television will not result in too many sharp disputes and accusations, although they will happen now and again. [end recording]

The SdRP leaders also said that, like all the other groups, they were awaiting an explanation from the

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government about the error in the taxation law on donations.

Poland: Social Democratic Party Faces Financial Crisis

LD0203183196 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1700 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Social Democracy of the Polish Republic [SDRP] authorities do not see any possibility of settling all the liabilities of the party owed to the State Treasury following the takeover by the SDRP of the assets and liabilities of the former Polish United Workers Party [PZPR]. SDRP Secretary General Jerzy Szmajdzinski has said that this will happen after a decision is made as to what parts of the PZPR assets, which accumulated from the contributions of its members, are to remain at the SDRP's disposal.

[Begin Szmajdzinski recording] It is a contentious issue and one that has not yet been settled between us and the State Treasury, as a result of the law on the takeover of the assets of the former PZPR, as to what assets should remain at the disposal of the SDRP, the legal successor [of the PZPR]. This matter, involving the liquidator and ourselves, has not been settled yet. When it is settled, the liabilities on our side will be met. [end recording]

The SDRP leader, Jozef Oleksy, said that a so-called white book would be prepared soon. It will present all of the aspects of the matter from the point of view of the SDRP to prevent the issue from being used as a political weapon by the right wing.

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Slovenia: Coalition Parties To Discuss Foreign Policy

AU0103184796 Ljubljana Radio Slovenia Network in Slovene 1430 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At a news conference today, Lojze Peterle, president of the Slovene Christian Democrats, praised, among other things, the functioning of the two-party coalition, because it has finally started negotiating on the foreign policy. Namely, the delegations of the Christian Democrats and Liberal Democracy met today and created a draft platform for the extraordinary session of the parliament devoted to the Slovene foreign policy.

The Christian Democrats, according to Peterle, insist that the government platform also list the priority goals, which are: Admission to the European Union, NATO, and the Western European Union, the signing of the EU association agreement, the application for the full-fledged EU membership, the harmonization of Slovene legislation with the European, and the intensification of contacts with the European Commission. If we can agree on these points, then we see no need to support the no-confidence vote on Foreign Minister Thaler, Lojze Peterle said.

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Federal

FRY: Official Sees Previaka as Normalization 'Problem'

AU0103160796 Belgrade Radio Beograd Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 1 Mar 96

[Report by Slavisa Stojkovic]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] The Federal Government has adopted the report on the activities of the FRY delegation at the recent meeting of the International Economic Forum in Davos. Deputy Foreign Minister Radoslav Bulajic briefed the press, who asked him several questions regarding diplomatic relations with former Yugoslav republics. Slavisa Stojkovic has the details:

[Stojkovic] Deputy Federal Foreign Minister Radoslav Bulajic stressed that Prime Minister Radoje Kontic's address in Davos had elicited wide reaction in the international diplomatic public and that it represented a great step in the further diplomatic and economic affirmation of the FRY.

In response to journalists' numerous questions regarding diplomatic relations with former Yugoslav republics, Radoslav Bulajic said the following:

Intense preparations are under way for the announced visit of Federal Foreign Minister Milan Milutinovic to Zagreb and the visit will certainly be realized in the course of this month. Milutinovic and his Croatian counterpart, Mate Granic, will discuss the normalization of relations between the two states, primarily at the economic level.

As for Previaka, there can be no talk about the full normalization of relations between the FRY and Croatia until this problem is solved. Negotiations on mutual recognition with Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia] have been most fruitful, and we can soon expect concrete results.

There are no controversial issues with Slovenia, as the FRY recognized Slovenia during the mandate of Prime Minister Panic, while Slovenia recently recognized the FRY. However, we will accept their recognition only when Slovenia accepts FRY's status as successor.

Finally, Deputy Foreign Minister Radoslav Bulajic said that personnel changes would be implemented in FRY diplomacy.

FRY: FRY, Albanian Officials on Normalizing Relations

LD0103212796 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2111 GMT 1 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 1 (TANJUG)—Yugoslav and Albanian officials said in Belgrade on Friday it was high time the two countries normalised their political relations with full respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Yugoslav Minister in Charge of Human and Minority Rights Margit Savovic and a delegation of Albania's Human Rights Party said that this would make the two countries and their minorities a bridge of Balkan and European cooperation.

A Yugoslav Government statement quoted the two sides as saying the minorities are expected to be loyal to their country of residence which respects their rights in line with all international norms and enables them to maintain ties with the country of origin.

Gjergji Lleka, vice-president of the Albanian party that rallies members of all ethnic minorities, said that his party had a clear position on Kosovo-Metohija as a province in the Yugoslav Republic of Serbia.

FRY: FRY, Cuba To Sign Parliamentary Cooperation Protocol

LD0103182196 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1735 GMT 1 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 1 (TANJUG)—Yugoslavia and Cuba agreed on Friday to sign a protocol on promoting cooperation between the two countries' parliaments.

The speaker of the Chamber of Republics of Yugoslavia's bicameral parliament, Radmilo Bogdanovic, and Deputy Speaker of the Cuban parliament Jaime Crombet said this would imply exchange visits and exchange of information on legislative activities.

The press office of the Yugoslav parliament said in a statement that both sides emphasized it was necessary to promote the traditionally friendly and close relations between the two countries.

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FRY: Cuban Delegates Promote Bilateral Ties

LD0303213596 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2117 GMT 3 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 3 (TANJUG)—Cuban parliament Vice-President Jaime Crombet said Sunday [3 March] the talks which he held in Belgrade these days with Yugoslav officials would help promote mutual relations.

Crombet, who is also a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, headed the party delegation to the 3rd congress of the ruling Socialist Party of Serbia which was held in Belgrade on Saturday.

Crombet had a meeting with Yugoslav Prime Minister Radoje Kontic and talks at the Yugoslav Assembly. In a statement to TANJUG, he said he had conveyed to his hosts in these talks Havana's official wish to strengthen bilateral relations in all areas, especially in economy and culture.

He assessed there were good prospects and vast possibilities for promoting bilateral relations. He specified that the Yugoslav side had been invited to send a parliamentary delegation to Cuba.

Crombet said his talks with Yugoslav officials had also covered raising Cuba's and Yugoslavia's diplomatic offices in Belgrade and Havana to the level of embassies.

Serbia

Serbia: Opposition Rally Protests SPS Policies

AU0403174896 Bad Vilbel VESTI in Serbo-Croatian 4 Mar 96 p 6

[BETA report: "Sumadija Has Risen, So Will All Serbia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Serbia can liberate itself and return into Europe only if all its democratic forces unite in the battle for reforms. This was concluded by Vuk Draskovic, Zoran Djindjic and Vesna Pesic, leaders of the Serbian Renewal Movement [SPO], Democratic Party [DS], and Civic Alliance of Serbia [GSS], respectively, at their meeting in Kragujevac two days ago [2 March].

The slogan of the meeting, held at Krst, was "Tomorrow Begins Today," and was attended by about 20,000 people.

The meeting, which was devoted to the anniversary of the 9 March 1991 demonstrations, began promptly at noon, which is also when the announced gathering will start on 9 March in Belgrade.

"Today the entire Sumadija has risen, and that is a sign that all Serbia will rise," SPO leader Vuk Draskovic stated. Draskovic said that Serbia is being circumvented, and that "all the trains bound for Europe and the future are far ahead of us."

He said that "if elections were held tomorrow, or if a greater revolt broke out tomorrow, and we were to replace the socialists in some other way, we would have to immediately issue a law protecting the poor, famished, and the hungry, which add up to more than 3 million."

"There would not be 800,000 refugees in Serbia, and the Serbian 'Krajinas' would not have fallen, had Serbia not fallen. Serbia fell because it has been pursuing an irrational path," said Draskovic and added that this path "brought Serbs from Krajina to Serbia with plastic bags, and turned them into people that the SPS [Serbian Socialist Party] and JUL [Yugoslav United Left] treat worse than livestock."

DS Chairman Zoran Djindjic said that "Serbia is run neither by a regime, party, nor Slobodan Milosevic, but by usurpation and dictatorship."

"We cannot fight this lunacy just by casting votes. We must fight by uniting everything that is normal in Serbia," Djindjic said and added that "the goal of the program led by Mira Markovic is to drive the nation insane."

The GSS Chairwoman Vesna Pesic said that "the Serbian liberation war has started in Kragujevac, while the socialists are concurrently holding their historic congresses and are living in an illusion, in which Serbia is in a deep sleep."

Pesic emphasized that the Serbian democratic powers should cooperate and work on unification. "We cannot do anything without such cooperation. Only a free Serbia can permit us to argue among ourselves."

She said that "we must be unified as long as we still live in a dictatorship."

"The Serbian democratic opposition is not a newcomer, and it must be united, now or never. The extremists, including the SPS, can walk alone," said Pesic.

Serbia: Milosevic Receives Ukrainian Officials

LD0103150996 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1437 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 1 Mar (TANJUG)—Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic today received a Ukrainian parliamentary delegation led by Ukrainian Supreme Council Chairman Oleksandr Moroz.

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In the course of a cordial and friendly meeting, the two sides stressed the friendly feelings and closeness which links the peoples of the two countries, and their mutual understanding and respect, which represents a basis for the constant and successful development of comprehensive bilateral relations and cooperation.

The FRY and Ukraine have great common interests, especially in the sphere of mutual economic cooperation. This is confirmed by the numerous contacts and developed business links between enterprises and the important natural resources which link the interests of the two countries, especially in the sphere of transport—and here the River Danube is of particular importance.

Both the FRY and Ukraine advocate closer regional cooperation and equal involvement in the modern processes of integration in Europe and the world.

The talks stressed the importance of the constant maintenance of political contacts between the two countries. The visit by the Ukrainian parliamentary delegation to our country is the best expression of this kind of commitment, and contributes above all to better mutual acquaintance and understanding.

There was also discussion of the most topical internal developments in the two countries, and their advocacy of strengthening peace and stability in the region.

Also taking part in the talks was Vadym Prymachenko, Ukrainian charge d'affaires in the FRY.

Serbia: Karadzic Urges Aid for Serbs Fleeing Sarajevo

AU0303144196 Paris AFP in English 0137 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 3 (AFP)—Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic appealed Saturday to Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic to provide aid for Serbs leaving Sarajevo suburbs due to be handed over to the Croat-Moslem Federation, the Bosnian Serb news agency SRNA reported.

"We urgently need help to evacuate and rehouse the people and their belongings," said Karadzic in a letter addressed to Milosevic, said SRNA which quoted excerpts of the message.

Karadzic, the "president" of the Serb Republic—the Serb entity recognised in the Bosnia peace accords—told Milosevic that the situation in Serb suburbs of Sarajevo was "very difficult." He called for "as many vehicles as possible" to be sent to speed up the evacuation.

About 30,000 Serbs have already left Sarajevo and 30,000 more are expected to do likewise in coming days. Karadzic also accused the police of the Croat-Moslem Federation of "committing excesses and illtreating the Serbs."

Serbia: Seselj Rejects Coalition in New Elections

AU0403115196 Bad Vilbel VESTI in Serbo-Croatian 4 Mar 96 p 6

[Unattributed report: "Coalition Out of the Question"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "The radicals will not form any kind of coalition in the new elections because we do not want anyone stealing our votes in the future, and what we want least is to argue with our coalition partner in front of the people," said the leader of the SRS [Serbian Radical Party], Vojislav Seselj, at a meeting of the SRS Executive Board.

In addition to the elections and the current political situation in Serbia, the meeting dealt with the radicals' preparations for the Fourth Homeland Congress, scheduled to be held in May.

Serbia: Thousands Join Anti-Milosevic Protest

AU0203211896 Paris AFP in English 2103 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 2 (AFP)—Some 20,000 opposition supporters took to the streets Saturday in an industrial center of Serbia in protest against the government of President Slobodan Milosevic, the independent Beta news agency reported.

The demonstration, in Kragujevac city, 130 kilometers (75 miles) south of Belgrade, came as Milosevic was confirmed for a new term as leader of his Serbian Socialist Party at a party congress in Belgrade.

It was mounted by three opposition groups as a dress rehearsal for a protest in Belgrade next Saturday to mark the fifth anniversary of an anti-government march that turned into a riot in which two people died.

More than 100,000 people had taken part in that protest, which demanded Milosevic's resignation. The incident prompted the biggest police deployment ever seen in Belgrade.

Opposition leaders at Saturday's rally called for "unity and cooperation" against what they termed the "totalitarianism and madness" represented by the president and his influentual wife Mirjana Markovic.

"Without cooperation and unification, there is nothing we can do," said Vesna Pesic, leader of the only non-nationalist party in Serbia, the Civic Alliance.

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"It's not enough to fill in ballots," added Democratic Party leader Zoran Djindjic, who accused the government of "clandestinely" bankrolling the communist parties and former secret services of Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania.

The leader of Serbia's main opposition SPO party, Vuk Draskovic, said it was the government's fault that the country had "missed all the trains towards integration with Europe."

Serbia: SPO Says Government Trying To Prevent Rally

AU2902151896 Belgrade NASA BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 29 Feb 96 p 2

[Statement by the Serbian Renewal Movement: "Telephones in SPO Presidency Disconnected"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade—The socialist authorities are trying in every way to prevent the organization of the rally by the democratic opposition scheduled for 9 March at noon at Freedom Square. With that in mind, yesterday, they disconnected the telephones in the Serbian Renewal Party [SPO] Presidency building to prevent it from communicating, sending faxes, and receiving calls, the SPO information service reports.

We are saying to the brutes that, regardless of all their foul moves, they will not be able to prevent the large membership and sympathizers of the democratic opposition in Serbia from rallying on 9 March at Freedom Square, the SPO statement says.

Serbia: Democratic Party To Boycott Serbian Assembly

LD0103162096 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1343 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Belgrade, 1 Mar (TANJUG)—Slobodan Vuksanovic, spokesman of the Democratic Party (DS), said today that the DS will not take part in sessions of the Serbian Assembly but it will take part in activities to mark the 9 March anniversary of the large Draskovic-led opposition rally in Belgrade.

At a news conference Vuksanovic said the DS would not take part, as he said, in possible sessions of the Serbian Assembly because television coverage of the sessions had been cancelled due to the way in which voting is carried out in parliament and due to the "theft of deputies' mandates." [passage omitted]

Serbia: Commentary Views Implementation of Peace Accord

AU0103183796 Belgrade POLITIKA EKSPRES in Serbo-Croatian 26 Feb 96 p 2

[Commentary by Momcilo Kovacevic: "Dayton X"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The general consensus of all the participants at the Dayton conference was that the realization of the peace agreement will depend primarily on the consistent and principled engagement of all sides in the conflict, especially the influential members of the international community. As time went by, though, some systematic inconsistencies surfaced that were subsequently misinterpreted. However, it was not possible to ignore the truth forever and that is why "Dayton Two" happened.

Regarding the Serb Republic and the guarantor (FRY) that the Serb Republic would consistently implement the decisions agreed, the Rome meeting was not needed. Namely, the Bosnian Serb Army pulled from the separation zones with the army of the Muslim-Croatian federation on time, and the Serb Republic liberated prisoners of war and facilitated access to the "mass graves." Praise for its cooperation with the Implementation Force [IFOR] came daily, especially after it had reiterated its firm determination for peace at the Vienna talks, agreeing to reduce its military potential by itself.

It is evident, however, that this "danger for peace" activity by the Serb Republic worried the warlords. To stop the overall peace activity of the Bosnian Serbs, the potentates behind the scenes resorted to tried and tested methods such as the attack of the Muslim terrorists on the Serbian wedding guests in spring 1992 in Bascarsija.

On IFOR-controlled territory, they kidnapped two Bosnian Serb Army officers (General Djukic and Colonel Krsmanovic). They were arrested by the Muslim authorities, however, the course of events that followed clearly indicated that the orders had came from someplace else than Sarajevo. Had this not been the case, would the command of the international forces have allowed itself to be compromised by Alija Izetbegovic? The officers were captured for at least two reasons—to provoke the Serb Republic into giving up on the further realization of the peace agreement and to again draw attention to and keep alive the Serbian "blame" for provocation and "crimes" in the war.

The aforementioned cunning cooked up jointly by IFOR and the Muslim-Croatian federation evidently bore fruit. To a great extent, the event overshadowed the irreconcilable differences of the two forced allies and their refusal to consistently implement the Dayton Agreement. The campaign about the alleged mass

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crimes of the Bosnian Serb Army against the Muslim population flared up, while the ethnic cleansing and the crimes that the Croatian Army had committed in the Republic of Serb Krajina went unnoticed. Nobody asks anymore why the Croatian Army did not pull out of Bosnia, although the deadline for this was 15 January 1996.

The terrorist behavior of Alija Izetbegovic continued, that is, his pledge that he would purge his army of the Mujahidins, also remained in the shadow. It is not likely that The Hague tribunal would finally also charge him with war crimes. Such bias displayed by Goldstone and his masters has a terrifying effect on the Serbian people who are supposed to remain within the borders of the Muslim-Croatian federation.

Dayton X will continue repeating itself for as long as the sponsors and benefactors of the Croats and the Muslims do not manage to dissuade their protegees from their irrational plan to recreate the NDH [Independent State of Croatia], that is, "the Islamic state" in the Balkans. Their goals and plans to create an ethnic state have also been apparent since Dayton Two (the agreement on the free movement of people in Mostar as of noon, 20 February, failed) and this cannot be continued forever while the Serbs are being treated as perpetual culprits.

The sooner the patrons and secret supporters free the Croats and the Muslim of such and similar illusions, the greater the chances for the realization of the peace agreement. Regarding this, the intention of the United States and Turkey to train and arm the Muslim army is worrying because this irrational plan cannot be in the service of peace but merely a powerful encouragement to the champions of war.

Kosovo

Kosovo: 90 Percent of Albanians Said To Be Unemployed

AU2902213096 Pristina KOSOVA DAILY REPORT in English 26 Feb 96

["Unemployment Rate Among Albanians in Kosova"—KOSOVA DAILY REPORT headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ninety percent of the entire population has been estimated at the soaring 90 percent! The Serbian regime's move to resettle Serb refugees to Kosova, with a view to changing the ethnic structure of the country and as a demographic weapon against the Albanians, has made the Kosova Albanians cry foul.

Serbia is using Kosova as a dumping ground for Serbs it had itself induced into fighting their neighbors in Bosnia and Croatia early in the 1990s. There is no wonder, therefore, why the Albanians have from the very beginning denounced Serbian moves of colonization of Kosova under the cover of "catering for Serb refugees!"

The Kosova leadership has made it clear, though, that the Serbs resettled to Kosova as part of the Serbian colonization scheme in the past few years will only be treated as settlers.

Kosovo: Ethnic Albanians Sentenced for Unauthaorized Meeting

LD2802123696 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1102 GMT 28 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Pristina, 28 Feb (Tanjug)—The magistrate court in Pristina today passed sentences of 50 days in prison each for [ethnic Albanians] Ljuljzim Nika, Ramadan Dauti, and Emin Hasim for organizing a meeting without submitting prior notification to the Secretariat for Internal Affairs.

The meeting on 24 February in the village of Trstenik in Glogovac municipality was organized to mark the 51st anniversary of the notorious rebellion by the Ballists [followers of the pro-fascist Balli Kombetar movement during the 1940's] in Drenica following the liberation of Kosovo-Metohija and the death of the rebel leader, Saban Poluza.

The three defendants admitted organizing the meeting and refused to engage defense lawyers.

The meeting was organized by the "National Democratic Party of Albanians" or the "Balli Kombetar" and the Democratic Union of Kosovo. The former was set up three years ago to, according to its program, continue the tradition of the notorious Ballist organization, which during World War II committed many crimes against the Serb population of Kosovo-Metohija. [passage omitted]

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